STORIES
and
VERSES

MARY STEWART DURIE

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Mary Stewart Doane

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BY

MARY STEWART DURIE

SELECTED AND PRINTED FOR PRIVATE CIRCULATION
BY HER HUSBAND, JAMES GOODWIN GIBSON

TORONTO
WILLIAM BRIGGS
1913

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These stories and verses are reprinted, not so much because of their literary merit as because, in the opinion of those who knew their author, they bear a strong impress of her personality. The author herself had a very modest opinion of their worth, and would not have desired any further publication. But in response to the request of many friends I have felt justified in making this selection from my wife's writings, and now offer it to them as a memorial of her.

A brief biographical sketch has been contributed by a dear friend, Mrs. E. W. Thomson, and Mr. E. W. Thomson has kindly allowed me to include two poems from his pen.

I desire to thank the publishers of the *Scottish American*, the *Canadian Magazine*, the *Westminster*, the *Presbyterian*, and the Editors of the Presbyterian Sunday School papers, *East and West* and the *King's Own*, for their kind permission to reprint such of the following stories and verses as appeared in their columns.

J. G. G.

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Born, Oct. 22, 1875.

Married, June 19, 1907.

Died, Nov. 29, 1911.

MARY STEWART DURIE was born in Ottawa, Ontario, and there and in its suburbs was spent the greater part of her short life. She was educated in Ottawa, and at Madame Amaron's French boarding-school, Berthier-en-haut, Quebec. In her thirteenth year she had the rare privilege of being for a time under the tuition of her maternal grandmother, Mrs. Locke, incomparable model of the Irish gentlewoman, at her home in Hamilton, Ontario. Her school-days over, there followed a course of training in nursing at the Rhode Island Homœopathic Hospital in Providence.

While still a young child, her mother's death had removed her to "The Lindens," the residence of her Scottish grandparents, a few miles from the city, and this dear spot was henceforth preeminently "home" to her, until her marriage

caused a new " Lindens " to be established in the suburb of Rockcliffe Park.

The above notes are brief, but from them may be learned the sources and inspiration of many of these tales and sketches. From the Highland grandmother came the Isle of Skye, with its tinge of melancholy, its true hearts; from hospital, from French village, from her Irish sympathies, the author knew how to gather strands magically to work and weave with upon her loom. But the beautiful and extensive garden and grounds of her childhood, at the dearly-loved " Lindens," first taught her that which breathes so tenderly in her verse, touches of which are in almost the whole of her literary work, and which became a true happiness throughout her life, her love of nature. There first a bird's song fell on her young, awakening ear, and blossoms opened to her comprehending eye. Eye and ear remained forever open to blossom and bird, to " what the mystical woods disclose." Never did she listen lightly, or glance unheeding, or cease to respond, as to something holy, to the throbbing heart of it all.

From the dates appended to the tales and poems, it will be observed that, with two exceptions, all were written previous to her marriage. The short years of her most happy wifehood were

amply filled with new duties and ties, new work and new pleasures, and the pen for the moment was laid aside. But it is to be believed that the gift of expression with which she was endowed, her powers of observation, imagination, and insight would, in time, have again asserted their right to be made use of in the art in which she was gaining so charming a facility.

Yet, alas! it was not to be. At the age of thirty-six, with all her talents, accomplishments and graces, in all her enchanting loveliness of mind and person, she was to vanish from our wistful gaze, and the "world of light" to claim her.

A. T.

OTTAWA, *May*, 1912.

OF MARY

When Mary comes she brings surprise
Afresh to my delighted eyes,
For though my memory declare
Her charming when she isn't there,
And though it tell, " Her looks express
A bright, peculiar winsomeness;
A sanity, madonna pure
From every wile that would allure;
A happy-hearted confidence
That means essential innocence
(While still her lovely eyes disclose
A wisdom only sorrow knows);"
And though my memory picture clear
Her lily grace and tone sincere,
And how her gentle accents send
To me the unspoken message, " Friend,"
Yet can I never quite retain,
She absent, never vision plain
That radiant smile which half dissolves
As if 'twere conscious of resolves
Never to let a mortal guess
At all an angel's comeliness,
And yet returns in utter charm
As if it weren't any harm.
It is that smile which brings surprise
Afresh to my delighted eyes.

E. W. T.

June, 1905.

STORIES

STORIES AND VERSES

A PRIEST OF THE LORD.*

YEARS and years ago David McQueen, a little Highland lad, used to run barefoot across the stretches of the white sand that glistens like snowdrift along the coast of the Isle of Skye. From his earliest remembrance almost he had gone out to sea with his father to help with the herring fishing, and knew the salty tang of the sea-blown air and the joy and terror of the storm-wind. He knew, too, what it was to stay

* This story is substantially true, being based upon the brief career of the writer's great-uncle, William Durie, minister of St. Andrew's Church, Ottawa. The facts are briefly set forth in the inscription upon his tomb in Beechwood Cemetery, near Ottawa, which is as follows:

"Erected to the Memory of the Rev. William Durie, by the Congregation of St. Andrew's Church, Bytown, who are desirous of recording in this Epitaph their testimony to the many virtues which adorned his public and private character.

"He was born at Glasgow, in 1804, ordained to the work of the Ministry at Earlston, in Scotland, in 1834, and inducted to the pastoral charge of St. Andrew's Church, in 1846. After the brief space of nine months, he was called away from this earthly scene. He died of typhus fever, which he caught in his assiduous attendance upon the sick and dying immigrants in the memorable year 1847. But although removed from this world, he will long live in the affection of those among whom, as a pastor, he faithfully labored, and of those also who, connected with other religious denominations, accounted it a privilege to be associated with him in labors of love."

on land with his mother and watch for the returning boats on evenings when the mist lay thick over the sea and not a sail could be seen. He knew, boy-like, the steepest, narrowest mountain-paths leading to the peaks of the majestic old Coolin Hills; he knew where the hawks' homes were, and the sound of an eagle's scream and the scent of the flowering broom, and the prickling of heather on the bare foot. And, half-consciously, he loved these things, but even better he grew to love his books.

No one ever knew, least of all the boy himself, how he had learned to read. After three or four weeks of the "horn-book" at "the school," he found himself one day, to some extent, master of the art. It bewildered and excited him as he pursued the words over the page as though thirsting for their life, and slew them manfully one by one.

The first book David read was an ancient volume with leather binding, containing tales of the Covenanters, their hair-breadth escapes and hidden meeting-places, their brave psalms and heroic faith. These stirred wonderful dreams in the lad's restless brain, spurred his imagination, filled him with eager ambitions for the future, and, most of all, left behind them a great thirst for books, which never left him.

Sandy McDonald, the uncertain-tempered old schoolmaster, glowering darkly at David's pretended inability to cope with the intricacies of "multiplication" and "long division," found a secret satisfaction in his pupil's capacity for reading of all sorts, and lent him generously from his own slimly-stocked bookshelf an occasional volume, which would be carried home like hidden treasure in the corner of the lad's plaid, and read in the evening by the glimmering light of the peat fire.

Indeed, old Sandy did more than this, for it was he who first mooted the question of "college" to the two fisherfolk, the boy's parents. He did this when David was still a stranger to "Cæsar" and the Greek alphabet, knowing that years would be required to accumulate the gold necessary to equip the lad when the day came, and to help him through his first year.

When he was twenty David McQueen went to the University, starting on his journey, as many another had done before him, barefoot, his boots and socks in his hand, and carrying with him the spirit of one ready to conquer the world.

Like a young eaglet who flies first from the eyry and finds his wings strong, David, measuring his strength of mind and body against the strength of other men of his age, found himself

equal to the battle, and the battle itself he found good. He worked energetically, tussling with mathematics, which he liked less than ever, glorying in the classics, and finding mines of wealth in English literature. He was to be a minister of the Church of Scotland—that had been decided before he left home.

The months flew past as the raw country boy worked early and late. In four years he had had two weeks holidays—no more—for during the vacations he had earned the wherewithal to put him through his college days safely, by tutoring the lazy son of a Scottish laird.

One day at last, four years from the time he had left the cottage in Skye, David marched back to it, aglow with excitement, his appointment from the Church of Scotland to a Canadian congregation in his hand. Margaret McQueen, a woman "all spirit, fire and dew," quivered and flushed as rosily as a girl when her great tall son strode up to her, and the hearty, keen-eyed fisherman, his father, straightened his bent shoulders and carried his head higher as he looked into David's dark, fearless eyes, and asked him how he fared.

They talked that evening—all three of them—in the Gaelic, and sat up late into the night, close to the glowing hearth. So happy were the two

old people that David found it no easy matter to break the news of his going away. He himself, indeed, experienced a strange pang at the prospect of leaving his home, for the love of country is a thing deeply rooted in the heart of Celt and Gael.

As for the parents, it was a blow heavy and stinging, but they bore it as those do who labor much and bear much always. They bowed to the inevitable, comforting themselves with thought of the lad's future glories in the new country. A week he stayed at the old home, living over again his boyish work and play on the coast, sailing out to the herring fishing with his father or sitting near his mother watching her knit or spin.

On the May morning that he said good-bye, Margaret and John McQueen walked far across the moors with their lad. The pink light of sunrise reflected itself across the sea from the eastern to the western sky, and as David looked, a flame-like rose color leaped along the rim of the gray-green sea. A swift vision seemed to flash before him at the moment, showing him that he should look no more on these things—no more of Skye, no more of the good, bent-shouldered fisherman, nor of Margaret McQueen of the silvery hair and the eyes that had the glance of understanding.

"Let Skye be proud of you, Light-of-my-eyes!" cried the mother bravely, as David set off, leaving her standing very erect and silent on the edge of the moor.

* * * * * *

In the new country, David McQueen found himself a stranger in a strange land. His hands were very full from the beginning. The Canadian town to which he had come was growing thriftily, and the young minister's congregation grew with it. He exulted in the sense of freedom a new land gives its laborers, and in the knowledge of a life-work begun. Much was said by the towns-people of the newcomer's "cleverness," of his good looks, of his enthusiasm, but one heard little of his friendliness or charity. He was a reserved man and slow to make close friends. Some people said he was hard.

He preached rousing sermons to his people. The words he chose were strong and simple, that all might comprehend. His dark, deep-set eyes flashed fire when he spoke in denunciation; and if they softened greatly when he looked on a sick child, few remarked it.

For a year and three months he preached to his people, christened them, married them, buried them, visited their sick, and strove to comfort their afflicted. He worked incessantly, though

often in bitter discouragement, having frequently in mind his mother's words, "Let Skye be proud of you, Light-of-my-eyes!"

The minister loved his kind, found a great interest in the lives of the most humble, but mourned within himself that his outward reserve hemmed him in so that in those first fifteen months he had won more admiration, more respect, than love from his people.

It happened about this time that on a certain Sabbath morning David McQueen preached as he had never preached before. He gave out his text slowly, his deep voice deeper yet with awe of his subject.

"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for," and there was a quiver in the resonant tone, "there is no work, nor device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave whither thou goest."

There was a short pause. The preacher began eagerly, as though in haste, and the listening people were shaken with the intensity in his words and in the dark glance of his eye. He carried his hearers with him to the close. Even those fathers in Israel, who were accustomed to slumber peacefully during the latter half of sermon-time, forgot their nap and listened attentively, their heads thrown back so that they

might the better watch the preacher as he stood in the high, old-fashioned pulpit and with impulsive gesture and burning eye urged them to their rightful life-tasks.

As they came out of church a great silence seemed to fall. Usually the quiet of the coming out of church was broken in the porch by the querulous, high-pitched voice of old Rannie McAllister, the caretaker; he found it necessary in winter to vindicate himself as to the temperature of the "kirk," and in summer as to its ventilation.

"Saxty-seeven an' a hauf!" he would say in the winter days, with ill-humored triumph, after brief reference to the thermometer which hung inside the inner doors.

"Saxty-seeven an' a hauf! A canna please ye a'. There's the fowk 'at comes frae the country, an' they're a' for keepin' her at saxty-five, an' whiles the grummlin' toon fowk says, 'Rannie, keep her at seeventy,' sae A'm juist mindin' none o' ye an' keepin' her tae suit masel' at saxty-seeven an' a hauf!"

On the Sunday of "the Sermon," as it was afterwards called, Rannie was explaining crossly the reason and origin of a draught which had blown across an elder's ear in sermon-time.

"Wheesht, man!" exclaimed a hard-headed old Scottish farmer, as he opened the porch door, "Ye'd dae better to be thinkin' o' yon sermon than stannin' there bletherin'!"

And even Rannie McAllister subsided. It was the following day that the river boat "Prince Consort" slipped slowly along the canal through the locks and into the Canal Basin. She came, bearing part of a ship-load of Irish immigrants who had landed at Quebec some days before. Word spread quickly through the town that fifty of these, down with ship-fever, had been landed and were left shelterless on the banks of the canal, close to the old dock. There was no regular hospital in the town, and the deadly contagion of the fever was so feared that no place else was open to them.

An hour after the message came, two men were seen making for the dock at a swinging stride. One was Father Molloy, the Irish Roman Catholic priest. The other was David McQueen. When they reached the Canal Basin they found their work ready to their hands. The immigrants lay at the sides of the dock, on the dry, turfed shore, in different stages of the swift and terrible disease. Many were moaning hopelessly, some lay in a deep stupor; nearly all cried for water. No leper could have been more sedu-

lously shunned than were these people by their fellow-men; no castaway on a desert island could have experienced a more desolating sense of loneliness than these ignorant strangers. They lay in torturing bitterness of spirit, caring nothing whether they lived or died.

These two men who came to succour them—these two young "priests of the Lord"—took in the situation at a glance, discussed ways and means briefly, and set their shoulders to the wheel.

A great number of heavy raftsmen's boats lay in the basin of the canal tethered to the shore. They were flat-bottomed "bonnes," rudely made, but strong. These they dragged up on shore, turned upside down, propped on their sides and placed with some yards of space between them, forming a sort of little settlement of lean-to dwellings. Under the shelter of these the patients were placed, the two men carrying them one by one as gently as they knew how. Many of the immigrants had their own mattresses with them, and lay on these. Others, less fortunate, lay on the bare, short grass, till, after two or three days, a kind-hearted farmer brought straw to make beds for them.

The tradespeople sent messengers with food and drink for the sufferers, messengers who set

down their burden cannily at the edge of the encampment and sped away as though a ghost of infection chased their heels. One kind soul, a French-Canadian woman, who had no children to guard from contagion, and evidently no fear of the disease for herself, went daily to help nurse the moaning fever patients, but she always left at sundown. Her "old man" must have his tea, she explained always. The doctor's visits were of necessity brief.

During the September nights, which were alternately oppressive with heat, or damp and chilly with hoar-frost at dawn, two people remained—the Catholic priest and the Protestant minister nursed the sick, prayed with the dying, buried the dead, day after day, night after night.

Occasionally one rested for two or three hours while the other did double duty. This became more possible as the numbers of the sick dwindled perceptibly, but even with that sad decrease there was more to be done than could be done by two.

The second Saturday following the arrival of the plague-stricken boat, one of David McQueen's elders went to reason with him. He complained that there had been no "service" in the kirk the Sabbath before.

"There are two kinds of 'service,'" remarked David shortly. He was bending over a small, rusty cooking-stove, which was set just outside the kitchen shelter, stirring some milk which he was warming for the one child left in the encampment.

The elder glared a little at the minister.

"Are ye no gaun to preach the Word to-morrow, man?" he inquired irately, moving a step or two backward as David approached some paces to reach a cup from the top of the unplaned packing-case which served as cupboard and table in one. David's dark eyes regarded his elder steadily.

"Will you take my place here, sir?"

The hard-featured elder showed slight discomfiture. "Impossible!" he said, with great decision. "Quite impossible!"

"Then there's nothing for it, but I must stay, sir. They cannot be left," and he glanced anxiously towards the pathetic little camp. A thin, piteous wail floated to their ears from one of the farthest boats. The child was growing impatient. David McQueen poured the milk into the delft cup, and turning on his heel to answer the call, walked quickly in the direction of the cry, while the astonished elder stood rooted to the spot.

A PRIEST OF THE LORD

Three weeks of unremitting labor and little comfort of mind or body will wear on the strongest man. David McQueen's spirits flagged. One hot noontide he was taking his turn of rest lying in a small military tent which had been mercifully sent him for his own use only, and which he shared with Father Molloy. He was tired to the point of exhaustion. The warmth of the day had seemed almost intolerable, and yet, waking from a troubled doze, a sort of chilliness crept over him unpleasantly. Presently he began to shiver. Indeed, he trembled so that he could not sleep for a long time, in spite of his intense weariness. When at last sleep came with returning warmth David saw visions which pleased and rested him inexpressibly. First it was the glistening white sea sand of the Skye shore; then the waves, white-capped and with deep green shadows in their depths, and a wide-winged seagull flying low over them; then it was a woman spinning in the dark doorway of a cottage, with the light from the many-paned little window falling aslant her silver hair. She looked at him with eyes which said many things, then he seemed to hear her soft Highland voice say again, "Skye will be proud of you, Pride-of-my-heart!"

This waked him, and he started up eagerly, thinking with anxiety that he had slept over his time. He looked at his watch, but its face was blurred, so he rose with stiff limbs and went in search of Father Molloy. It was the priest's turn to rest and he needed it sorely, good Irishman, yet when he saw David's dull-red, fevered cheek and dilated eye, he begged him to go back to the tent and sleep again.

The minister refused point blank, repeating over and over that he was "fit for anything." The priest, scanning the other's face anxiously, feared in his heart that typhus had found another victim; yet so utterly fatigued was he, so blinded with lack of sleep, that he acquiesced at last, leaving to David's care the thirty-eight patients who remained.

The two hours which followed were an eternity to the young minister. He staggered uncertainly as he walked from one shelter to another ministering to the wants of the sufferers. It was a martyrdom. At last, in trying to carry a cool drink to a poor young Irish lad whose lips were parched with thirst, he stumbled and was forced to lean for support against one of the piers of the old bridge which spanned the canal. Then he sat down on the sloping shore. His head swam dizzily and his faculties were dazed. With

great exertion he gathered his failing strength and half crawled to the place where the sick boy lay and held the cup to the fevered lips with a hand that shook.

That night there was another patient in the hospital camp, and Father Molloy was alone at his post. The word went around among the immigrants who were beginning to recover that "'Twas the poor, blessed Protestant praste that was down wit' it now." Some of the warm-hearted Irish peasants sobbed when they heard it. David McQueen had helped more than one of them turn those sharpest corners which are oftenest turned alone.

As for David McQueen himself, he faced his death as bravely as he had faced his life, which had been short and full of work.

Father Molloy, full of sympathy for his brave young colleague, murmured Romanish prayers over the dying minister of the Church of Scotland, and when the life-flame flickered and went out, laid a silver crucifix on the pillow beside him.

A SKYE WOMAN

Cradled in a dimple on a Skye braeside, lay the cot of Ian Stewart, shepherd. Rudely built it was, and more rudely thatched, but strong, primitive in its simplicity, the grays and browns of its ancient walls and the faded heather in the thatch blending with the russet and purple of the surrounding heath, as though the cottage itself had sprung from Nature with the rest.

The whirr of a spinning-wheel came from within, mocking the feebler humming of the bees in the heather bloom.

In the darkness of the doorway stood a barefooted slip of a girl, homespun-clad, knitting. The steel needles clicked as the nimble brown fingers guided them skilfully through the woollen meshes, but all the while Katriona Stewart's grey eyes were gazing, not on the sock in her hands, but out and away to the sea at the foot of the brae.

There was a wistful look about the child, and her eyes fell a moment, the dark lashes sweeping her cheek, as she brushed away a tear.

"Bairn!"

The call came from within.

"Aye, Mither!" and the grey eyes lifted watchfully. The needles were stuck into the ball of yarn, and the half-finished stocking laid hurriedly on the chimney-shelf as Katriona passed through to the inner room.

A woman past middle age sat at the spinning-wheel, her hands now folded on her lap, the distaff laid by, and traces of tears on her face. She wore a loose-fitting, long-shouldered gown of gray homespun, its sombreness relieved by a white kerchief crossed on her breast and a coarse, white linen apron. Her hair was almost white, yet there was something youthful, almost girlish, about her. Possibly it was the uprightness of her form, a certain slimness and ease of movement, the colour that came and went easily in the delicate face—one hardly knew what. A sternness marked her brow, for all its peaceful look, and the mouth, though sensitive, had a conquering resoluteness about it; but when you saw the eyes of the woman, dark-grey, deep-set, you knew her. You wondered whether there was more in them of Highland fire or Highland tenderness.

The girl was swiftly at her side kneeling on the floor.

"Ye'll no' be greetin', surely, Mither," said

she, leaning her dark head against her mother's arm.

"Na, na, bairn, what for should I be greetin'? But I'll be thinkin' that the new country'll neffer be mine own country, and the Sassenach tongue is ill to speak. 'Twas effer an evil tongue, and I'll canna learn thae mou'ing English words."

"Eh, Mither, wad ye be fleytin' noo at ta last minute, you that's sae spunky? Isna Ranald waitin' for's at Winnipeg, an' a muckle hoose, and plenty siller beside, an' the fields sae full o' grain they canna harvest it. Doesna feyther care for leavin' bonny Scotland, too? Are ye a hair waur aff than him?"

"No' a hair waur aff than yer feyther, bairn, an' yet, an' yet—he's an Inverness man, ye ken. But, oh, lassie, I was born a Skye bairn, an' sair I'll be missin' the hills o' her, an' the sicht o' the heather an' the smell o' the sea—aye, an' the soon' o' the pipes on the braes!"

"Aye, Mither, I ken, an' the soon' o' the sea in the nicht, pittin' ye aff to sleep, lappin' at the shore, an' croonin', aye croonin'. It minds me times o' your sangs, Mither."

Suddenly the two fell to sobbing aloud, and mother and bairn, locked in each other's arms, cried as though their hearts would break. The sobs of the mother ceased first. A strange thing

in life is the hopelessness of a child's grief. It sees no end to its trouble or pain, but the woman's maturer years teach her that there is an end to all things, even sorrow.

"Wheesht, bairn, wheesht!" said Mary Stewart of the heavy heart, to her child. "Yer feyther's comin'!"

A man was striding up the path that led from the house door to the moors that lay behind. Katriona dashed the tears from her eyes, sprang up, and in a moment had the kettle on the hob, the table spread with a white cloth and drawn before the fire, and when the shepherd entered he found the girl bending down sweeping up the hearth with a strong goosewing.

Ian Stewart had to bend low his head to enter the humble door of his home. He was a brawny, stalwart man in spite of his seventy years. His blue eyes still looked keenly from beneath a heavy brow, and under his gruff exterior the shepherd hid a heart of gold.

"Weel, Mither?"

He laid a hand on his wife's shoulder, glanced at her observantly as she lifted her heartbroken gaze to him, and said no more, but stretched himself on the bench in the chimney corner and looked into the peat fire. Words would not mend matters now, he thought.

At the evening meal of oaten cake the shepherd spoke shortly of the sale of the sheep, which had taken place in the village of Talisker, of the price they had brought, of a purchaser he had found for the cows; also of their coming journey to Canada, on which they were to start at the week-end. Mary Stewart's pluck was deserting her. A great fear of the new country and a great yearning for her own land of Skye swayed her whole being. She could utter no word to her gudeman's discourse.

Supper over, while Katriona washed the coarse delft plates and bowls, the mother slipped out of the cottage and down the steep path to the rocky shore.

A point of land jutted far out into the sea. Along this she walked till she came to the end, where rose a massive rock with a flat top, its seaward face scarred with the buffeting of many storms. She mounted the rock, and on this vantage-ground stood, her figure upright and motionless, her gaze fixed on the sea before her. Something queenly there was in her pose as she stood there shading her eyes with her hand, something that suggested a remote royal ancestry, and which is not given to all.

The deep green of the water was broken by

white-capped waves that rolled in, and in, and then broke against the rock under the woman's feet. Beyond, the sun was setting in a glory of rose and gold and long-drawn streaks of clear, pale green. A fresh breeze blew up from the sea, and there was a moaning from the sea which wrung Mary Stewart's homesick heart.

She could remember when she was a "wean," toddling down to that very shore, and looking with wide, baby eyes out on the great green water and listening to the roar and splash of the waves.

She drank it all in eagerly, but she must not linger too long. She must see the moors and the hills before the sun went down. Slowly she turned and ascended the hilly path, and then the brae at the back of the cottage, till she could see the moors stretching away and away beyond, covered these August days with the rich purple and lilac and rose of the heather. Beyond the moors rose the Coolin Hills, the jagged, rugged outline of Scair-na-Gillean dominating the view.

Mary Stewart knew every line and curve of those hills—knew how they looked in the pink light of dawn, in the glare of noonday, or when winter's white mantle hid the heather on their sides. Whether sea or hills were dearest, most interwoven with the very fibre of her being, she did not know, but "Oh! my bonny, bonny Skye!"

she said, as the last slanting ray from the setting sun disappeared and the dark came down.

When she turned her face towards the cot in the hollow she knew, as certainly as though Azrael himself had whispered it in her ear, that she was saying farewell forever. Then a sudden trembling came upon her, a quick pain and dizziness as she clenched her hands, crying—"I *canna, canna,* thole it."

When the mother re-entered the kitchen place, and Katriona noted a sort of unsteadiness in her mother's walk, when the firelight revealed the hungry look in her eyes, the girl rose swiftly and took the mother's shaking hands in her own warm young fingers and gently led her to a chair by the fire. She still held the trembling hands even when the shepherd solemnly reached for the great Bible which stood on a rough table by the fireside, and raised his voice in a Gaelic Psalm. Mary and Katriona joined in the familiar words of

"The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want,"

Katriona's flutelike voice piping clearly above the shepherd's deep bass drone and Mary's quavering notes.

"Is e Dia féin a's buachaill dhomb,
Cha bhi mi ann an dìth,"

they sang.

Something in Mary's throat seemed to choke her, and there was a mistiness about her eyes which she could not brush away.

And though Mary Stewart by a great effort controlled her trembling voice as she said " Good nicht " to the bairn, it was with a breaking heart that she went to rest that night.

*   *   *   *   *   *

Long before the sun peeped over the Coolin Hills next morning Ian was stirring. The kine had to be milked and foddered preparatory to driving them to Talisker, where a purchaser waited. The shepherd sighed as he passed the empty sheepfolds, but his mind was chiefly busied with the grief his wife felt at the " flittin'." " It's a sair trial tae her," he murmured in dismay, as he turned to enter the cot, " sair, sair!"

All was quiet in the house, and the shepherd wondered that the mother had not yet risen to make the porridge for their early breakfast.

" I'll no' disturb her," he said, clumsily tip-toeing about the kitchen.

But as he crossed the door-sill between the kitchen and the sleeping-chamber a fear suddenly gripped his heart. He looked anxiously over to the white bed where his wife lay. The morning sun came in through the little casement and touched rosily the white hair where it parted

over the broad brow and the pale face on the pillow. The worn hands were folded wearily on the patchwork coverlet, and there was a shining gladness about the face which made Ian Stewart's voice fail him as he stumbled to her across the room crying brokenly:

"Eh! lassie, lassie, what's gane wrang wi' ye?" But there was no answer.

The Skye Bairn had flitted to her "Feyther's hoose."

* * * * * *

Some weeks later the shepherd and Katriona walked hand in hand up the braeside to a sunny spot looking towards the sea where a grave was hidden in the heather. On the humble gray headstone, carved clumsily by Ian's own hands, were these words:

"MARY STEWART,

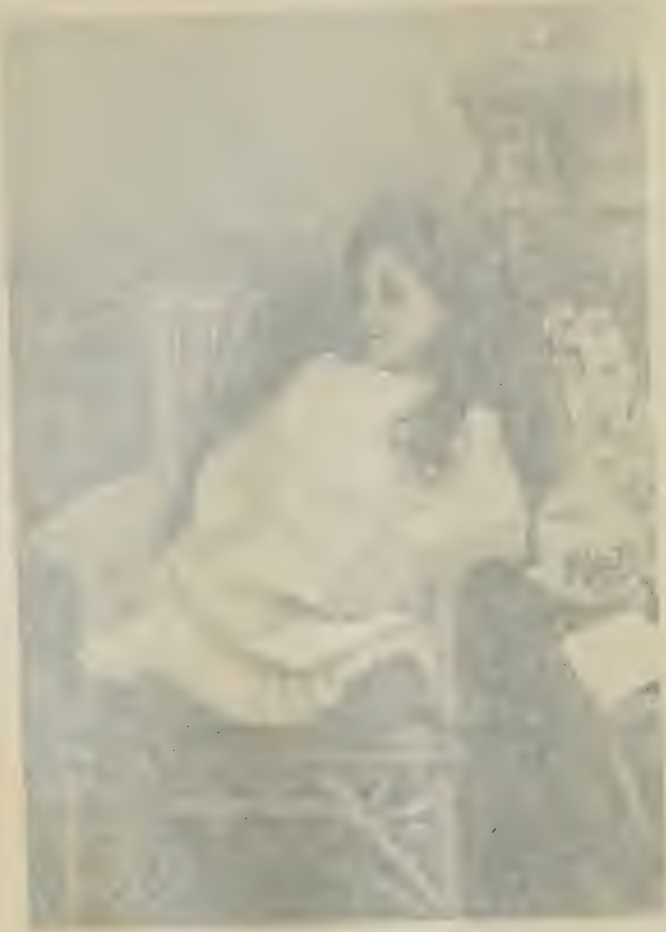
A SKYE WOMAN."

MARY STEWART DURIE
(1885)

ST. COLUMBA'S SPRING

HIDDEN among the rocks, high up on a wind-swept peak of the Coolin Hills in the Isle of Skye, a narrow mountain stream has its rising. It bubbles up from the earth gamesomely and leaps foaming over the rocky ledges, curtaining itself with spray here and there where a granite boulder lies in its path, till, coming to a fair, smooth hillside, it races down madly toward the sea.

To a stranger's ears the stream sings merrily enough, but to those who dwell near it, and herd their sheep on the hills, it chants a weird song of ancient days, of ancient fastnesses and of the heart of the Coolins whence it springs. There is a fierce, wild minor strain in its song as you hear it high up near its source, where the whaups cry lonesomely; but when it loses itself in the heather as it winds down the slopes at Carra-[illegible], it has forgotten its [illegible] and all its past glories and sorrows and runs gently, crooning itself to sleep as it falls over a mossy ledge into a great rock basin, hewn out of the solid granite by some [illegible] in the far-off years. Into this hollow the waters of the



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stream, worn to a thread with much branching and dividing of itself, trickle gently with a soft, constant drip, drip, drip, crystal clear and cold as ice.

There is a legend that Skye mothers still tell to wondering bairns of good St. Columba, in the ancient days when he roamed the moors and mountains of the isle. A day of pitiless, scorching summer glare had left the Saint sadly athirst. At sundown he came upon the bed of the stream near the hollowed rock where he hoped to quench his thirst, but found that its waters were dried away, licked up by the fiery-tongued sun rays. Then St. Columba, being bitterly athirst, cried to his Maker, and behold, there sprang up waters in the desert. There was a sudden rushing and murmur and splash of water down the mountain side, and the rock basin was brimming over with the cold, clear treasure, so that the good Saint drank his fill and blessed the spot with his name. So, at least, the old tale goes, and sure it is that to this day the water is there, pure and fresh as the mountain breezes and as never-failing as the oil in the widow's cruse.

There was a day and a sunset hour when Katriona McLean, young and slender, knelt barefoot at the spring to dip up a pailful of water for the evening meal at her mother's cot on the

hill. The wooden pail was filled and the girl bent to lift it, when a strong voice rang out from the braeside above her.

"Haud still a minute, lassie! A'll be fillin' yer pail for ye, an' carry't up for ye, too, gin ye will. It's no' for sma', slenner han's like them tae fash theirsel's wi' sich wark!"

Katriona looked up and saw brawny Alastair McDonnuil striding impatiently down the brae, as he called to her. There was a note of command in the voice which the high-spirited girl did not relish, and, drawing the dripping pail up with a swift, graceful motion, she set it down on the pebbly earth with decision.

The lad stood beside her in a moment, tall and very erect, his dark hair tossed back carelessly from a noble brow. He stooped to lift the pail for her, though her slim brown hand already grasped the handle.

"Awa' wi' ye, Alastair!"

There seemed to be laughter and tears in the voice. A pair of eyes, blue with the blue of the sea, looked up in friendly defiance straight into the dark, eager eyes of Alastair McDonnuil, and, finding there something strange and surprising, flinched and withdrew their gaze in a shyness hitherto unknown.

"Katriona!"

The lad's vibrant tone smote the girl with an unreasoning joy and fear. An impulse to flee seized her.

"I canna' bide ye, Alastair McDonnuil, an' ye may *tak'* the pail gin ye will!" she cried, turning to flee swiftly up the hilly path that led to her home. Alastair watched her flight, a great amazement in his eyes.

"What's ta'en the lassie?" he exclaimed under his breath, "Hoo did she ken, an' no' a word oot o' my heid?"

He picked the pail up and began a slow and thoughtful ascent of the pebbly path, for he was considering within himself in what manner he might best approach this saucy damsel. A ringing laugh, fresh and delicious, floated to his ears, interrupting his solemn meditations. He looked up and saw Katriona, who had turned as she reached her mother's door and was now regarding him with amusement.

"Puir lad," she was crying, "yon's a hard bit o' wark ye're at, is it no'?" She laughed softly, tantalizingly again, and, turning, disappeared within the dark doorway of the cottage, a loose strand of her fair, straight hair blowing across her face.

"My! but she's terrible bonny," sighed the lad, "an' she's richt enoo' that I'm at a hard bit o'

wark. She'll be the deith o' me if she keeps on!" But he smiled to himself, nevertheless.

When Alastair set the brimming pail down on the door-sill, Sheila McLean, Katriona's mother, received him with the welcoming glance that waited for him at every house in the countryside. As for the girl, she was nowhere to be seen, and had probably disappeared into the second room which the little cottage boasted. Half an hour later, however, as Alastair took his way homeward, westward over the moor, he caught a glimpse of a blue homespun frock and white kerchief high up on a hill, which he knew adorned no other than Katriona McLean. Pursuit suggested itself, but, being wise for a youth, he did not follow her, setting his face, instead, resolutely toward his home over the moor.

And this was but the prelude to the wooing and winning of Katriona McLean. There were many long summer twilights to follow—the mystic twilights of May and June, about which St. Columba's Spring, had it been gossipingly inclined, could have told tales of words and glances which must remain unrecorded, save in the hearts of the two they most concerned. They were happy days enough, brimful of life and heart's joy, but they came to an end.

A cloud blew up into their fair sky. The "Gov-

ernment"—that strange, far-off, all-powerful leviathan—had offered a free sea-passage to America to settlers from Skye and the neighboring islands, a free passage and at the end of the journey a freehold in the new country. Whether the "Government" were on this side of the sea or on that, the crofters were uncertain. They were not sure of the why and the wherefore of it all. One thing they knew, they were being given a chance to sail away to America, that land of dreams. They were poor in their dearly-loved island, earning a bare living, some by small sheep-farming, others, on the coast, by fishing. Most of them knew the pinch that poverty can bring, and, consequently, there was to be an exodus from Carrabaish. Scarcely half a dozen scattered families would remain in the parish. Other villages were sending a large proportion of their population. Katriona's brothers, Sandy and John, were going with the rest. Their mother wept bitter tears at the thought of the separation.

"Ye'll come wi' us, then, Mither, yersel' an' Katriona, an' we'll mak' ye as gran' as queens."

"Dinna ask me, lads. I'll canna be leavin' yer feyther's grave, an' the ithers lyin' oot i' the graveyard. Na, na! Gang yersel's."

As for Alastair McDonnuil, his heart beat

high at the thought of going out into the great world. He had considered well. He had read enough, thought enough, to realize, at least in part, what it meant to remain buried in the island in which he had been born and bred—a happy life enough, if one could earn a comfortable living, which was not always; a happy and industrious life with a peaceful end at last, but nothing more. The lad's quenchless thirst for something wider, some hand-to-hand encounter in the battle of life, some larger outlook, urged him to go. His love for Katriona bade him stay.

"An' are ye gaun, Alastair?"

The two had climbed high up among the hills searching for white heather, and were wandering hand in hand as children do. It was the evening before the exodus that emptied Skye of many a stalwart son.

"I winna gang, gin ye bid me stay," he said, looking at the girl with earnest, questioning eyes.

Katriona's red lip quivered unsteadily and a darkness of foreboding shadowed her eyes.

"I winna bid ye!" She held her head proudly and smiled a little uncertainly.

"Then canna ye come yersel', lassie mine?" he began impetuously.

"Alastair," she said steadily, her heart looking

out of her sea-blue eyes, whether she would or no, "a' body's gaun, I ken, but ye see there's ma mither. She'll never leave them 'at's sleepin' oot on the moor," and she pointed to the east where the little ancient graveyard lay.

"Katriona McLean," he cried, "ye dinna care for me ony mair. Ye telt me ae day 'at ye did, but ye dinna care the noo, I'm feared, when the kirkyard where yer forbears lie is mair to ye than Alastair McDonnuil!" He caught her hand passionately, but she withdrew herself from him with a little fierce gesture.

"Aye," she said huskily, with a sudden paleness about her lips, "aye, I think I dinna care ower much, Alastair!" There was a strained intensity in her voice. Her mind now was fully made up. Alastair must go and seek his fortune in the rich, new land. Was she going to be a millstone about his neck, holding him back from that success which she felt sure awaited him beyond the seas? She scorned herself, remembering how nearly she had held him back, and threw her head up proudly, purposefully, but as she met the gaze of her lover the crimson dyed cheek and brow, and even the fair whiteness of her neck where the kerchief was knotted.

"Go, Alastair," she cried, resolutely; "go if ye lo'e me. It is my wish."

There was the dignity of self-sacrifice in the words. Alastair looked out across the moor beneath them, as though searching for inspiration. His mind was torn between conflicting desires.

"I'll go, lassie mine," he said; "but twa years from now, Alastair McDonnuil will be comin' back to ye again, wi' gold an' learnin'. An' that day, *Mo-ghaol,*" he went on, breaking into the Gaelic, "that day he'll wait at Columba's Spring for her that's to be his bride. Will she be comin' to him, Katriona?"

"Dinna fash me!" she said turning from him impatiently and walking swiftly down the slope toward the cot on the brae. Alastair longed to follow her, but forbore, comforting himself with the thought of a long farewell, "the morn's morning."

As for Katriona, she saw nothing, heard nothing in her retreat. Earth and sky melted before her eyes into a vague mist. As she neared the cottage, however, her wandering thoughts were brought to earth again by the sound of several familiar voices within the cottage. Evidently some of the neighbors had come to say good-bye to her mother before their departure on the morrow.

"Sic' an a clack!" she exclaimed disgustedly to her mother when the last guest had gone.

The mother sat looking out of the window, following with her eyes the little company of her friends as they departed. She was well past middle age, wearing the white cap of an old woman, yet her perceptions were not too dim to see, as she turned to Katriona, something unusual in the girl's bearing which led her to remark with apparent indifference:

"Alastair has no' been to say guid-bye yet!"

"Has he no', Mither?"

"Has he no' bid *you* guid-bye, Katriona?"

"O aye, Mither, but there's some fowk sic cuifs that they maun say guid-bye twa-three times."

And she was right in her surmise. Alastair went that evening to bid farewell to Mrs. McLean, Katriona still remaining invisible, and the next morning the sun's rays barely fell aslant the thatched roof of the cottage before he stood before its door, which stood wide open to the morning breeze.

Sheila McLean was stirring the porridge which bubbled and steamed cheerfully in the black iron pot hanging on the crane of the ancient stone fireplace.

There was no sign of Katriona. She had gone out very early, the mother said. The lad rejoiced inwardly. She had gone to await him at

their old meeting-place by the spring. He knew it, and marched eagerly down the hill-path, straining his eyes all the way for the sight of a golden head and the bright blue homespun dress. His spirits fell a little as he saw no trace of his sweetheart anywhere. He waited for some time, hoping for her coming. "Katriona! Katriona!" he called. His voice echoed among the hills, but there was no answer.

The girl had risen early and was roaming the moor before sunrise, a sick desolation at her heart, and in her mind a determination that she should in no wise stand in the light of the man she loved. To keep him in Skye! It was not to be thought of for a moment. And she knew that if she showed any sign of relenting, any strong desire that he should stay, that stay he would. He *must* go, though it was gall and bitterness to Katriona McLean. She had heard his call from the spring, and, every fibre of her being yearning to answer it, had hardened her heart as best she could, holding one slim hand over her mouth in case an unwary cry should escape her. Another farewell might be more than her heart and flesh could bear. Was it days or hours, she wondered, that she waited there on the moor to see the last of him—crouching at last in the heather that he might not catch the glint of her golden hair.

At last he came, striding along grimly, swiftly rather, for the rest of the company had started before him. He carried his bundle in his hand in simple shepherd and crofter fashion. How brave and stalwart, she thought. Nothing but the Gaelic would do to express her thought of him, and she whispered the words low that he might not hear half a mile away. Aye, there he was, mounting a little hill that would hide him from her sight. She sprang to her feet and ran a few steps unconsciously. She kissed her two sun-browned hands and flung them out despairingly towards the retreating figure. If Alastair McDonnuil could have seen his sweetheart at that moment, not America nor all its boasted riches could have lured him from her side. As it was, he was going from her, miserably uncertain of her love, fearing greatly that she would not remain true to him for those two long years of absence.

He reached the top of the little heather-crowned hill and stood for a moment there, his tall figure, diminished by the distance, black against the pink light of the sunrise. Would he turn? Everything in all the world seemed to hinge on that question. Yes, he was turning for a last look at his moors and hills, perhaps hoping for a last glimpse of her. She would look little

more than a speck in the distance, she reflected. She must give him Godspeed.

Katriona tore the snowy kerchief from her throat and waved it eagerly. There was a pause of a moment, then the distant figure snatched off a Scotch bonnet and waved it over his head, waved it and waved it till at last the hill hid him from view.

"She doesna' care," Alastair muttered dismally to himself as he strode along; "she doesna' gie a brass farthen for me!" He sighed heavily, and "She's naught but a wilfu' bairn," he said; while far below him on the moor the wilful bairn lay among the broom sobbing as though her heart would break.

Then began long, long days in Skye. Katriona had never known a day to be too long before. The loneliness crept close to Sheila McLean and her daughter. Sandy and John, the brothers, had gone with the rest, and a silence settled over the cot on the hill where the two women dwelt alone. A crofter's lad from the next parish was hired to mind the sheep, but this soon appearing to be extravagance, Katriona sent the boy away and herded them herself, leaving her mother to perform alone the lighter household tasks.

The girl loved the hills and dales where she

tended the sheep. The pungent, swift-blowing air of the mountains braced her, body and soul —nerved her for her work. The color of the moors in the light of sunrise and sunset filled her with a joy which she could not explain, and the wide reaches of moorland to the west spurred her imagination till she lived in a land of dreams, as much an enchanted princess as any maiden in song or story. The lonesomeness of the cottage, when she returned to it at nightfall, smote her with fresh cruelty each evening, but once out with the sheep, the solitariness seemed not to touch her. It vexed her at times to think of what the long days must be to her mother in the empty little home, but she chased the thought away fearfully, especially on those days when no dreams came, and when time spun itself out unendingly. And this happened occasionally, even in those first months of separation, while summer still lingered and the heatherbloom was at its rosiest.

That year the winter came early with bitter cold and howling winds. The snow already lay deep on the ground, when one day in December a wild snowstorm came and some of the sheep were lost in it. Katriona was with the flock high up the mountain-side, when suddenly a strange-sounding wind blew up from the west, drifting

the snow into fantastic heaps, and swirling the falling flakes madly about, as they fell thickly from a gray, leaden sky. Two or three of the flock's yearlings had strayed higher still up the rocky incline, and the girl, drawing her shawl closely about her, set off in search of them, while "Bran," the old collie, was excitedly divided in his mind as to whether he should drive the rest of the huddling, stumbling flock home or join in the search.

"Tak' them home, Bran, guid dog," called the girl imperatively, and Bran obeyed, while his mistress watched from an overhanging crag, cheering him to his work. The snow was drifting wildly on the peaks of the Coolins. Their old heads were crowned with white snow-wreaths. The air was blindingly filled with the falling flakes and the drifting snow, and Katriona, pluckily fighting the storm, in the end was beaten. The search was unavailing, and she descended the craggy slopes staggering with weariness and the uncertainty of foothold. The sheep were terrified, floundering about in the drifts and huddling together miserably in spite of Bran's efforts. It was not an easy task to drive them home, and Katriona breathed a sigh of relief as at last the trembling, witless creatures were safely driven into the sheep-shelter for the night.

That bitter cold twilight, as Katriona McLean and her mother crouched over their peat fire talking together, a dread of something to come seized the girl. The family finances were at a low ebb, indeed, but the fear of poverty had never entered the girl's mind before. There were always the sheep, she had reasoned with herself. But of these a few had already been sold to eke out their humble store, and now three more were lost in the storm. The helplessness, the utter loneliness of their position came to the girl for the first time with appalling clearness. She tried to comfort herself with the thought of the money Sandy and John would send to relieve them. Then, when all other comfort failed, she thought of Alastair McDonnuil. There had been occasional letters from the three wanderers; from the two brothers the type of letter that is written by those to whom writing is untold labor, and lucid expression of thought an unknown quantity; from Alastair, messages roughly written, ill-spelt at times, yet breathing forth some of his own strong, free spirit, his high ambition and his love for Katriona McLean.

These were the girl's jewels. She carried them in the bosom of her blue homespun gown, and the memory of each word in her heart, bringing forth the hidden treasure, as she dreamed on the sum-

mer days, lying among the furze and broom on the sunny slopes, or as she sat by the fireside in chill, wintry evenings, when her mother had gone to rest. She built high, wondrous castles-in-the-air for Alastair, as she sat with the firelight in her sea-blue eyes, grown wide with dreaming. She thought of him becoming rich and learned, a king among men, and did not see that in these prophetic musings she was only widening the distance between his life and hers. This knowledge also came to her in a flash, one night in January, when everything was still in the little home but the ticking of the clock on the chimney-shelf, or the occasional falling of a peat cinder. She was learning to read "the English" with a vague idea of keeping pace with her lover.

The schoolmaster who had taught the children of Carrabaish, when Katriona had been a school-girl, and who now lived not in Skye at all, but in an Argyllshire hamlet, had passed one day through the parish, and finding the girl who had been his brightest pupil athirst for learning, had sent her by an Argyllshire shepherd some books to read and ponder. She had made a fair beginning with her English reading in the old days at the little rough stone cottage which had been the school, and now one of the books had proved so interesting that she read with unrestrained

eagerness. It was a tale of a peasant lad and lass, of the lad's ambition, of his finding his way to the university, of his exaltation to the high places of the earth, and his consequent forsaking of his little country sweetheart.

Katriona was reading eagerly, having reached the crux of the situation. When she came to the bitter ending the book fell from her hands, and she gazed unseeingly into the glowing coals, sitting there in a stunned preoccupation till, long after the peat embers had ceased to glow, she rose stiffly and wearily went to her bed.

On the afternoon of the following day two letters came by the hand of a Carrabaish boy, who had met the carrier in the next parish. One of the letters was from "the lads," one from Alastair. Katriona took them hastily to the window, and, seating herself on the floor at her mother's feet, read them by the fading light. She opened Alastair's letter first, separating the seal carefully from the paper that nothing of it be spoiled.

"Katriona *Mo-ghaol,*" ran the message, and the Gaelic word went to the girl's heart as she read: "The morn's mornin' we're for the west. We're no far enough that direction yet. The pot of gold, ye see, lassie mine, is where the gowden sun dips down ayont the hills. And we maun

find the gold, ye ken, for when it's found, it's a' for you. There'll be no letters fra' there. Ye canna send them but twice, or maybe twa-three times i' the year, but after a' what's letters tae you an' me? Mind ye dinna forget our tryst twa years fra' the day I left, at Columba's Spring (how I mind the soon' o' that water comin' doon the rocks!), and—*Mo-luaidh*—dinna forget.

"ALASTAIR MCDONNUIL."

No more letters! What does one feel who is told of coming starvation? Katriona caught her breath piteously, then a glance at her mother made her hold her head bravely as she opened Sandy's letter to read to the mother, stifling her own grief as she thought of what the news would be to the older woman. From this second letter a three-pound note fell out—a godsend. "It's frae us all, mither," explained Sandy honestly in his letter, "but chiefly frae Alastair, but he winna' be pleased at me tellin' ye." The girl watched with concern the white face of her mother as she heard the news of this further separation. She was surprised at the calmness with which it was received, but from that day Katriona saw that her mother had lost heart.

Sheila McLean, come of a sinewy Celtic stock, whose endurance of hardship was invincible,

failed in health as the winter wore itself out, slowly but surely losing ground each day, till, in the early spring, when Katriona was busying herself with the care of the new-born lambs, the mother fell ill. The girl that summer was nurse as well as shepherdess. She would often sit at the cottage door in the long summer afternoons holding a little sick lamb on her lap, watching one moment the sheep straying on the moor, and the next looking anxiously within the cottage to the rudely carved wooden bed where her mother lay.

One warm evening, when the crickets were singing, loudly insistent, in the dry grass, Katriona knelt on the ground by the cottage door trying to revive one of the three fleecy lambs remaining to them. She noticed that the small flock of sheep had strayed far out of sight, and there was no sign even of Bran. She began to call the dog, holding one of her hands to her mouth trumpet-wise to carry the sound.

"Hi, Bran! Bran! Here, guid dog!"

She waited till she heard Bran's short, sharp bark of command, as he turned his charges homeward. Then, as she was seating herself on the turf she heard her mother's voice calling her a little fretfully with that mournful intonation which belongs to the Celtic voice:

"Eh, bairn, but yon's a terrible far-away country whaur the lads sailed to. It fair breaks ma heart tae think o' them!"

Katriona sat by her mother coaxing her, cheering her, then went back to her place at the doorstep, gaily singing a snatch of Gaelic song. Her voice was like a robin's clear piping. It soothed the mother, for the girl could hear her saying, "Aye, aye," at the end of each verse, as though satisfied. Then, gathering the little lamb in her strong young arms, Katriona reseated herself on the doorstep and began to hum, half unconsciously, a lullaby to the little creature:

> "Bye, birdie crin,
> Bye, birdie crin;
> The sheep are up on the mountain high,
> An' the kine are in the broom!"

With the words and air of the old Scottish cradle-song came to the girl the memory of the days when her mother had crooned it over her, as she lay a fair-haired child in a wooden cradle, while the warm fragrance of the broom was blown in at the window, and the bees added their droning chorus to the lullaby.

Then, as she sang, she heard her mother talking to herself in her beloved Gaelic tongue, talking as though in haste, with a strange intonation that brought Katriona to the bedside eagerly.

"Mither, dear, what is't?" she cried, taking one of the thin, work-worn hands in her own and stroking it tenderly.

"Bairn," said Sheila McLean, looking up as though freshly awakened; "if yer mither gangs awa' to a country that's far away, ye'll no leave them 'at's sleepin' oot on the moor? Ye'll bide an' mind yer feyther's grave, Katriona?"

The truth that her mother was leaving her flashed upon the girl with cruel suddenness. "Aye, Mither, I'll bide, never fear. I'll bide—Mither dear!"

That night Katriona knew that she was solitary indeed, and before daylight faded on the following day her mother was among those she had spoken of—"sleepin' oot on the moor."

One grows accustomed to solitariness, they tell us, as to other hardships. Katriona took up her life again the evening of the funeral. A warm-hearted cousin, come from the north coast of the island for the "burying," had offered to take the lonely girl home with her, had begged her even to go, but Katriona had refused with decision. Her love for her mother was a passion with her. She must, at all hazards, keep the promise made to that mother in her extremity.

The handful of people who had gathered for

the humble funeral dispersed at sundown, leaving the girl standing in the dark doorway, the slanting sun rays touching into purest gold the glory of her hair, her figure proudly erect, her hands shading her eyes as she watched them depart. They had mostly come from the north, and the girl felt that she did not know them. They were her mother's kin, however, and had been treated with the Highland hospitality that was due them. Nevertheless it was good to her to see them depart.

When the figures of her guests had faded into the gathering dusk, Katriona turned mechanically to the household tasks. She washed the coarse delft dishes with care, and put them away in their accustomed place; made tidy the table, swept the hearth and went to the sheep-shelter, where the sheep had been left all day in the unwonted stir. The creatures welcomed her in their poor fashion, pattering over to her as she entered, with satisfied bleats as she brought them fodder. She picked up the sick lamb and carried it to the house with her. It would take the sharpest edge off her suffering to have some warm living thing beside her in the empty cottage. She bolted the door, and seating herself on a low bench near the chimney corner, held the lamb on her knee, stroking its soft wool with gentle, absent-minded fingers.

The ceaseless singing of the crickets in the grass came in through the open window, intensifying the stillness and lonesomeness of the night, wearying the girl inexpressibly. A dozen times during the long hours of darkness she raised her head as she sat there, listening intently.

"Mither!" she would whisper passionately across the room, "Mither!"

And when no answer came she only gathered the lamb closer to her with a little shiver, and sat very still again in the dark.

When that autumn, a few weeks later, the emptiness of the purse grew so apparent that Katriona drove to the nearest market, miles away, what was left of her flock, the crofter who bought the sheep remarked that the girl was "no canny." He had given her a paltry price.

"Is that a'?" demanded Katriona, fiercely. The man cowered a little before her blue gaze. He had expected a saint and found a young tigress, and, much to his own surprise, he found himself adding to the price, excusing himself by the explanation that he was "a puir mon himsel'." As for the girl, she saw at once that the price of the little flock would not be sufficient for her support during the winter and spring to come, and her brave spirit wavered before the

knowledge. The hardness of the winter was even greater than she had looked for. That fierce wolf, Poverty, prowled about her door. She had met his eye more than once, and met it bravely, but the solitariness and the stillness were killing her.

Many a mournful tale could St. Columba's Spring have told of a girl who came in the wintry weather and sat shivering by the hollowed rock, her chin in her hands, staring vacantly into the distance. No occupation was left her, and she could seek none. She waited. The waiting was her life. Yet, if asked what she waited for, she could hardly have told. She would seldom allow herself to think of Alastair McDonnuil, and the book in which she had read of the unfaithful swain seemed to frown down on her in timely warning from the chimney shelf. "Aye! Aye! I ken!" she would murmur sometimes as she looked at it. But occasionally its frown made her cry like a bairn.

It was in March that she herself grew ill and lay delirious for days, alone and uncared for, before a passer-by discovered the fact, and a motherly crofter's wife from ten miles away went to nurse the girl through a tedious fever. When the woman at last went home Katriona was convalescent, moving about feebly with the air of one "in worlds not realized."

"She's no' a'thegither right in her heid," the kind woman had told her neighbors; "an' it's sma' wonder that she's no'. It's no' canny that she should bide by hersel' that gait, but she'll no' listen tae a word o' reason."

When Katriona came again to the Spring, it was early summer once more. Poverty, hunger, illness had left their mark upon her. The roundness of her young cheek had given place to a pitiful hollow. She had lost all count of time, all care for anything. A proud, dumb misery had eaten into her consciousness till it was numbed. She did not know that, involuntarily, she was that day keeping her tryst with Alastair McDonnuil. She knew it was summer, and that it was more pleasant to be out in the warm sunshine than in the cottage.

Katriona McLean knelt low at the Spring and dipped up a cup of the cool water. The pool was clear as glass, and bending over it she caught a glimpse of her own reflection in its surface.

"Wha is't?" she gasped in terror; "is't a ghaist—a ghaist?" She stared at it as though fascinated. Her image in the water—the pale, wraith-like face, and the long fair hair hanging over her shoulders, seemed a haunting vision.

A footfall on the gravel made her look up with fear in her eyes. A stranger stood there—tall, powerfully built, brown of cheek and hand. She

regarded him with wondering, innocent eyes, as a child might have done.

"Katriona," said a deep voice that seemed to make something stir in the girl's memory; "Katriona McLean, div ye no' ken me?"

There was bitter disappointment, endless pity in the tone. The girl's look did not waver. "Na, I'll no' ken ye," she replied indifferently, withdrawing her gaze.

The stranger came nearer to her, and, seating himself beside her, spoke in a low tone, comforting her, soothing her as though she were indeed a child.

"Div ye no mind Alastair McDonnuil?" She started at the words and looked up at him keenly. One would have said that there was a flash of blue fire from her eyes.

"Aye, I kenned *him*. Can ye tell me aught o' him?"

The color swept across her fair cheek and brow.

"Mo-ghaol!" cried Alastair, heart-brokenly. Katriona started afresh at the Gaelic word in the once well-known voice.

Her eyes met his and they looked all at once like the sea on an April day of sunshine and rain. She laughed softly—the very laugh of old.

"*Mo-luaidh!*" she cried, for the Gaelic itself was none too good for him.

PETER: A SON OF ERIN

PETER knelt on the grass border beneath one of the hospital windows, bending laboriously over the tulip-bed, as he rooted out stray grass-seedlings and saucy weeds from the smoothly-heaped curve of the earth. As he worked he apostrophized these little upstarts in an undertone.

"Out wid ye thin, ye tormints! Is it spilin' me tulips on me that ye're afther, or what?"

The tulips airily flaunted their gay heads beneath the old gardener's kindly eye, as though frankly conscious of his pride in them, as he straightened his shoulders and knelt back on his heels to contemplate the result of his labors.

His keen old eyes ran observantly first over his tulips, then over the smooth, tender green of the lawn beyond, dotted with an occasional short-stemmed dandelion; then to the bright yellow daffodils under the south windows of the Surgical Ward. Pride shone in his eyes as he looked.

Along the gravel path that led from the Nurses' Home at the north end of the garden came a group of seven or eight nurses in blue cotton dresses and white linen aprons, bibs

and caps that glistened in the morning sunshine. They chatted as they walked in twos and threes, some talking merrily and laughing, others discussing something evidently more serious. None of them were too engrossed to join in the chorus of "Good morning, Peter!" that greeted the figure grubbing at the tulip-bed.

The old gardener touched his cap, looking up cheerfully at the group with a mixture of friendliness and respect.

His face was clean-shaven, and as clean as laundry soap and cold water could make it. His mouth drooped at the corners in the melancholy manner of even the merriest of Irish mouths when in repose. His smile was Irish, beaming—indescribable, a sort of "clear shining after rain," good to see.

When a few minutes later the head nurse, Miss O'Brien, passed him on her way to the wards, Peter's manner of salutation was adorned with, if possible, more respect, tempered with the friendly admiration one sees occasionally in old servants. "Good morning, Peter!" said she.

"Good marnin', Miss Molly, ma'am!"

(He insisted, in spite of rebukes from the superintendent of nurses, on calling Miss O'Brien "Miss Molly.")

"A beautiful marnin' this, miss!"

He scanned her face anxiously, and finding it more serious than usual, added:

"Nothin' wrong wid ye, I'm hopin', Miss Molly?"

"No, no, Peter; what makes you ask?" she said cheerfully. "And, oh, Peter, what beauties your tulips are this year!"

The girl bent down to pluck one of the scarlet gold and green parrot tulips, and fastened it in her dress, to Peter's delight. He smiled approval and pride as she said good-bye.

"Och, good-bye, an' God bless ye, Miss Molly, dear!" he said. It was to Peter's mind the only appropriate way of ending any conversation with Miss O'Brien, however brief.

To tell the truth, Peter himself had been the subject of the girl's thoughts. Only that morning she had been informed of the decision of the board of directors of the hospital to amalgamate with the great new Emergency Hospital in the centre of the city. Nurses and officers, patients and servants were to be transferred from the old suburban hospital to the large new building in the very heart of the bustling city. What would become of Peter?—Peter, who had worked in the hospital garden for forty years; who knew no life but his happy out-of-door one amid sunshine and flowers; Peter, whose short winters of

comparative idleness and comfort were even now little short of martyrdom, even with the consolation of tobacco and seed catalogues.

She wondered if she should drop a hint to him of the coming change. No. The change could not be made before the autumn. She would wait, Micawber-like, for "something to turn up" for Peter.

The long summer days were wearing themselves out, and the hospital garden bloomed as it had never bloomed before. Peter's heart sang within him. Never since, a young stripling of eighteen, newly emigrated from Ireland, he had first worked in this Canadian garden, had he seen such profusion of bloom. Never had the nasturtiums come forth so variously garbed! Never were the hollyhocks so fine, so frilly, so richly colored or so tall! Their pink and crimson and amber-colored rosettes flared gorgeously against the blue of the sky one September day, when Peter, measuring-line in hand, descended from the step-ladder he was obliged to use in order to reach the haughty chins of the tallest hollyhock blooms. He was chuckling to himself as he carried away the step-ladder.

"Tin feet foive inches, no less, as I'm a livin' sowl. 'Twould be hard to foind the bate av thim, if I *do* say it as shouldn't!"

His pride in his garden appeared to have reached a climax.

One day soon after—a day in earliest October—Peter was again grubbing on his knees, planting the crocus bulbs for the next spring's blooming. A trowel lay beside him, but hands were fashioned long before trowels, and Peter's thumb was making deep holes for the bulbs in the soft, rich earth more deftly than any trowel could have done. As he worked he was planning his crocus beds' arrangement. This coming year the purples and the mauves and the yellows would not be placed in separate patches. He would grow them all together, a gorgeous mass of color. This matter decided, he sang, as he planted the bulbs, in muffled, rusty tones, but withal, gaily enough, a song learned in his youth.

Dr. Mainguy, the house surgeon, smiled as he came towards Peter, and heard the tune and the words:

> "Och hone, my petticoat red!
> Sure round the world I'll beg me bread.
> Oh, how I wish that I was dead,
> *Medilla Mavourneen Shlawn!*"

The happiness of the croaky voice contrasted oddly with the plaintive wail of the Celtic words. The doctor wondered how Peter would take the news he had to give him that morning. In two

weeks more the garden must lose forever its presiding genius.

"Poor old soul!" thought Dr. Mainguy, bracing himself to pronounce the old man's doom.

Peter rose somewhat stiffly from his cramped posture, as the doctor spoke to him, and rubbed his hands together to free them of the clinging leaf-mould. In ten minutes the news had been broken.

Peter's interrupted song repeated itself dully in his mind as he listened. A vague idea of the meaning of the doctor's words began to dawn upon him. His weather-browned cheek paled and his voice quavered out:

"Say it wanst more, sorr, plaze, that I may be understandin' ye betther. Savin' yer prisence, sorr, who'd be tendin' th' owld gardin, like, widout *I* did it?"

The doctor explained. A puzzled, mournful look drifted across the innocent, ignorant eyes. Then he understood and nodded his head slowly.

"Yes, sorr, I see, sorr; but it's the truth I'm tellin' ye whin I say, I can't tell what I'll be afther doin' widout the crather, afther these forty years bein' wid her like, an' this year bein'—"

Great sobs choked his utterance, shaking him from head to foot. To leave his garden! It was more than mortal could bear.

That night Peter sat pondering deeply in his bare little bedroom under the hospital kitchen. His shoulders drooped wearily. The stunned look had gone from his visage, but it had left behind it deep, sad lines in brow and cheek. There was no sleep for Peter that night, but before midnight he had decided upon a course of action. He set his little room in order and sat down again to collect his thoughts. He did some slow and clumsy ciphering on the back of a blank seed list. When the lazy October sun rose at last he bestirred himself once more, and, just as the pink dawn was bathing his garden in the fresh, eerie light of daybreak, he issued forth from the kitchen door, taking care to make no noise with his heavy shoes. As he shut the door behind him, a quick, sharp pang of homesickness made him cover his eyes tightly with one hand, while with his other he groped his way to the back gate, lest he should behold again his dearly-loved garden. He could not look at it to say farewell.

Eight o'clock found Peter in a clothier's shop in town anxiously making purchases. A suit first, a hat, overalls; an entire outfit in short, including a tie "wid a bit av green to it."

The clerk smiled at his eagerness and haste.

Did they keep Catholic prayer-books, too? Or pocket-books?

The clerk shook his head, suppressing a smile as he tied the huge parcel and snipped the twine. The old man shouldered his bundle with difficulty and departed to complete his purchases elsewhere. This accomplished, the way lay plain before him.

Heavy-footed and with the uncertain step of the aged, he plodded to his destination. From the foot of the hospital garden sloped the orchard, a neglected wilderness of ancient gnarled apple trees and currant bushes, and at the foot of the orchard lay a low marshy field. Beyond it, and lower still, lay what was known as "Cat Swamp," a dark bog, in the centre of which were three deep, treacherous pools. To Cat Swamp Peter took his weary way. He had heard of a poor despairing wretch who had solved his earthly problems in the depths of one of these weird ponds, and he vaguely felt that here he, Peter Malone, was saying good-bye to the old life and beginning the new and strange one—for this he meant to do.

He took off the well-worn, familiar garments, laid them neatly beside one of the great fallen trees which stretched itself along the edge of one of the pools, and proceeded to don his new garments bravely. The tears dimmed his eyes as he felt himself encased in the new, strange clothes,

the stiff, creaking boots, innocent of acquaintance with the muddy earth of the garden. A faint gleam of pleasure lighted his countenance as he struggled with the newly purchased tie, a wonderful creation of green and black stripes. He dashed the tears from his eyes, and set out as briskly as his age and his untried boots allowed him, creaking along the country sidewalks, and clattering and squeaking on the pavements of the town till he arrived at the narrow lane that led to the docks. On the pier he hired as a truckman, and Peter's new life had begun.

. . . .

Months passed and Peter, the truckman, worked as hard as ever Peter, the gardener, had done. "Malone," as they called him, and sometimes "Paddy" (this last when they laughed good-naturedly at his strange ways), "was a bit queer in the upper storey." So, at least, the dockmen were apt to say.

. . . .

Peter's sudden disappearance and the finding of the neat bundle of clothes in Cat Swamp naturally led to but one conclusion—the daily papers headed their accounts in this manner:

"*A Unique Case of Suicide.*

"Drowned in Cat Swamp—A faithful servant chose death rather than dismissal."

But the papers for once—or twice—were entirely wrong.

This they discovered one day in the following June, when the ambulance brought to the Emergency Hospital on a stretcher, a certain old man from the docks. A packing case had fallen on his leg and crushed it. The head nurse had received the patient and had cried out:

"Why, it's Peter—our dear old Peter! Where did he come from?"

When Peter's senses returned to him he found himself in a snowy bed in a ward, his leg in a splint. On the glass-topped table by his bedside some pink and white tulips were saucily reaching their heads from a glass of water. A dart of memory shot through the bewildered mind at sight of them.

Molly O'Brien bent over him smiling.

"Peter, Peter," she was saying; "how good it is to see you again! Where have you been? Do you remember me, Peter?"

A puzzled look crossed his face.

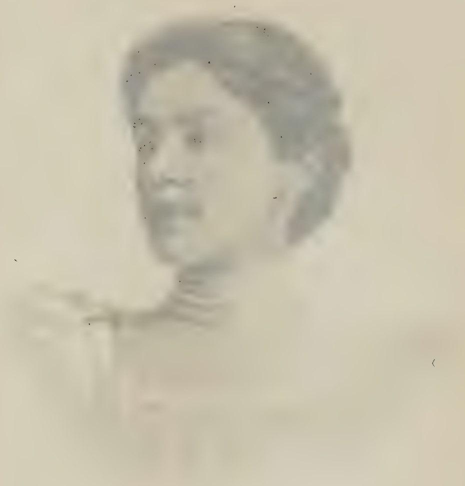
"Peter?" he said slowly. "Peter? Och sure, Miss Molly, ye mane him as used to tind th' owld garden beyant. Sure him and me was the great owld frinds—God bless ye, Miss Molly, dear!"

THE LADY OF THE LAMP

From the time Elizabeth was old enough to have ideas on the subject of a "career," she had longed to be a hospital nurse. As a child she had been a dreamer, a lover of stories of knightly valor, of romantic self-sacrifice, and heroic devotion. She used to wish she had been born in those old days when such noble deeds appear to have been rife, instead of in these tame, prosaic, twentieth century days, when the puff and rush of automobiles are heard in place of the galloping of bravely caparisoned chargers, and when there are no imprisoned damsels to rescue.

Besides the fact that these good old days were gone, she realized that after all, she, being a maiden, could not herself have done the rescuing, or the fighting, or tilting at tournaments, and would have had, in any case, to content herself with being rescued, or with buckling on her knight's armor before he rode away to the battle.

So Elizabeth turned her thoughts wisely to what she could do. She was not particularly anxious to go to college. The most desirable



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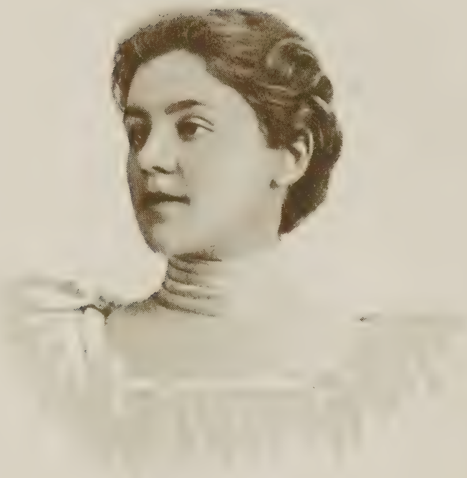


MARY STEWART DURIE
(1895)

occupation for a woman in these days, she thought, was nursing. Sick and hurt things always appealed to her, and there was a romantic side to it all, as seen from a distance, which excited her wild imagination, and set a halo about the life of a hospital nurse.

When she was fifteen or sixteen, Elizabeth came accidentally across some pages in a book describing Florence Nightingale and her work, which set her tingling to begin the training for that noble and heroic life which she meant to live. She read one or two paragraphs over and over.

"But how came it that Florence Nightingale devoted herself to the profession of nursing? She need never have devoted herself to so trying an occupation. She was an accomplished girl, possessing abundant means. She was a general favorite, and the centre of an admiring circle. . . . The soldiers blessed her as they saw her shadow falling over their pillows at night. They did not know her name; they merely called her 'The Lady of the Lamp.'"

This book stimulated afresh the girl's longing to begin her chosen work, and she talked a great deal of her plans and hopes. Her brothers laughed at her avowed scorn for grown-up girls who were content to stay at home in ease and

idleness, with no object in life. Her mother listened patiently, half amused, and half anxious.

"As for being the sort of girl the boys tell about, Mother," she said one day, as they talked together on the verandah, "the sort of girl who talks and thinks of nothing but the last dance, and the next skating party, I'd rather be a—a scullery maid."

"Whew! listen to Elizabeth!" exclaimed Grant, one of her brothers, who was comfortably stretched in a hammock. "She's riding her hobby at a gallop. Be careful, Mother, or you'll be run over."

"Boys should be seen and not heard," remarked Elizabeth.

"Because we're so ornamental, that is, Bobbie," murmured Grant with a die-away expression on his freckled face.

"Do try to be sensible, Grant."

"And if at first I don't succeed, I'll try, try—"

"Grant!" in despair.

"Madam?"

"Be good, and listen while I tell you and Mother my plans."

Grant sat up suddenly in the hammock with a subdued look of listening intently.

"Fire away!" he said.

So, thus encouraged, Elizabeth proceeded to

set forth her plans for the future. Her parents discouraged the idea, and hoped the girl would change her mind, and Grant often begged her, in the teasing way that only " a man and a brother " knows, " to change her tune."

For some time Elizabeth was discreetly silent on the subject of her ambitions; indeed, for the three years that followed, she scarcely mentioned the interest that was nearest her heart. However, she in no whit abandoned her determination that some day she would take a nurse's training at a large hospital. The year she was nineteen her opportunity came.

The family finances happened to be already at a rather low ebb when a mining company, in which Elizabeth's father was interested, suddenly failed. It was a great blow to Mr. Runnier, and a bitter thing to be obliged to withdraw his two sons from college, but there was nothing else for it. The boys must go to work, in the meantime, at least.

" And what about the *girl,* Daddy?" inquired Elizabeth.

" The girl? Well, there's only one of her, you see, so we can't spare her just yet."

Nevertheless, Elizabeth, who realized that in a hospital she could at least be self-supporting, had her way, and three months after the disaster

found herself in a probationer's uniform, in one of the large surgical wards of the "Good Samaritan Hospital."

Those first days were hard ones. To Elizabeth it was all so strange that sometimes she wondered if she were not dreaming; if she would not wake up in a few minutes to find herself cosily in her soft little bed at home, with the white and blue hangings. Nursing the poor in a great city hospital was so different from her inexperienced ideas of it. The glamour was fading. She could not feel the noble "angel of mercy" of which she had dreamed. She was tired and homesick, and the drudgery that falls to the lot of the "probationer" was displeasing to her. She learned to make a "hospital bed" in the most approved manner—not an easy task—to "take temperatures," to do the thousand and one duties that a nurse finds awaiting her in a ward. After two weeks of pure discouragement and weariness, however, the girl began to find a satisfaction in the mere sense of useful work faithfully performed. The patients began to interest her.

"It is all so *different*, Mother," she wrote home one evening, when every nerve seemed quivering with weariness, "not one scrap romantic or noble, no chance for heroism. It is one whirlpool of work from morning till night—very hard —and yet I begin to like it intensely.

"The other day I was sent to help for the afternoon in a strange ward. When I went on duty in our own ward next morning, a queer, cross-eyed old Irish woman, with the temper of a demon, began to cry with joy at the sight of me. 'Is it back ye are, darlin', crame av the hivins! Sure the place has been as sad as a cimitery without ye.' And that really cheered me up!

"All the same, I would like to escape a little of the matter-of-fact drudgery, and have a chance to do some little 'deed of knightly valor,' such as I used to dream of."

When Mrs. Runnier answered her daughter's hastily scribbled letter she wrote:

"Elizabeth, dear, no one ever did a brave or heroic thing without having been prepared for it by little noble things done steadily day by day. These things count in the end, and a life filled with them might be heroic even if there was never time or chance for one great deed."

Elizabeth read that letter of her mother's the evening of her first experience of night duty, just before she and five other night nurses went to the gas-lighted dining-room to have "breakfast." As the six trooped down the wide staircase, Elizabeth put the letter in her pocket with a little pat. It would be a sort of talisman.

Having "breakfast" at six o'clock in the evening was queer enough, but still queerer, more

eerie, was it to be left in charge of a long ward for the night. When the girl had looked at the nurse's bulletin which hung in the hall, she had been thankful to find that she was to be on duty in the children's ward, but she came rather near to changing her mind on that point before morning.

When she went on duty, a small Armenian of four years, whose two fat legs were in plaster casts, was wailing tearlessly. Elizabeth tried in vain to quiet him. Cunning wiles of speech were useless, as the child understood little English. He waved a little imperious brown hand when she made advances.

"Away! away!" he cried, and for two long hours was not to be appeased. When he did fall asleep, it was with one brown hand clutching firmly the hem of Elizabeth's apron as she stood beside him, and it was a work requiring some ingenuity to unclasp it without waking the excitable little foreigner.

At one end of the ward two large white screens shut off three cots whose little occupants were seriously ill. Elizabeth's attention was given principally to these little sufferers. Soon, by the dim light of a low-turned gas jet, she could see that two of these were fast asleep. The other, a baby of three, who had had a narrow escape from

brain fever, was restless. He moaned and turned his golden head from side to side. The icebag needed refilling, and Elizabeth, with a careful glance up and down the row of twenty little white beds, seeing everything was quiet, stole softly from the ward and down the corridor, icebag in hand. What a blessing that the nineteen were asleep!

As she returned noiselessly, save for the rustling of her crisp white apron, she heard the crash of a glass knocked from a bedside table, and with it a chorus. Every child in the ward wakened with the sound, some of them terrified, others cross, others brought back from the ease of sleep to the consciousness of pain and discomfort. Every child had to be separately pacified, coaxed or reasoned with, coddled and tucked in afresh. Twenty pillows had to be turned. Gruel had to to be judiciously dispensed.

Elizabeth, whose experience of children had been small, was almost at her wits' end for two hours. She wished vainly that it were possible for mortal girl to be in two or three places at one moment of time. Her patience was tried to its utmost limit. But in the end, after a full two hours of struggle, peace was restored. Once more nineteen sleepy, regular breathings could be heard. One child, with big brown eyes, all

piteous with homesickness, was crying softly, but continuously, "Rock me, rock me, and I'll be good."

Elizabeth lifted her gently out of bed, wrapped a blanket closely about the little white-garbed figure, and carrying her to a wicker rocking chair close to a warm air register, began to rock softly, humming as she rocked. Not till then did she realize quite how tired she was, how hopelessly sleepy. When the child on her knee slept, she still sat on, gazing out through a window, where the blind had been left up, at the flickering, red light of a winter dawn. Even the wide reaches of snow were tinged with pink with the light of it as it came gloriously up the sky. The girl was inexpressibly rested by the beauty, the calmness of it.

The night had been hard enough, but after all she had made it much easier for her little patients. How well worth while it all was!

And so the days flew by—and the months, till the two years' course of training was almost completed. Elizabeth's heart was entirely in her work. She had succeeded, was accounted possibly the best nurse in the "Good Samaritan," stood high in her classes. Now for the exams! The girl, who was of an ambitious turn of mind, set herself for the gold medal, rose early, studied

late, as late, that is, as hospital regulations permitted.

One day in late August, three weeks before the examinations were to take place, she was summoned to the superintendent's office. The head nurse smiled as the girl entered, in spotless array. She approved of Elizabeth.

"I'm sorry, Miss Runnier," she apologized briskly, "but although we do not usually allow our undergraduates to nurse outside cases, exceptions must occasionally be made. Evidently there are no nurses to be had—all busy or on their holidays. Dr. Greenway must have a nurse. I suggested that you should go, as the case is one that will require good nursing—typhoid with complications."

Elizabeth's spirits sank as she thought of the approaching examinations, and of the unreadiness she felt. Now there would be no chance of studying up—not a moment to spare, probably. But it was clearly a duty. Besides, she was ordered to go. Plainly there was nothing else to be done.

Her brown eyes lighted up with spirit. "Very well, Miss Hyde," she said, "and the address?"

The case proved quite as serious as the head nurse had said. The patient, a young university freshman, lay with wide-open eyes, in a dreamy,

semi-conscious sleeplessness, that was the worst feature of the case. For days the lad was in this condition, with restlessly turning head. On the sixth day of wakefulness, the doctor looked graver than ever. "Not much chance for the poor boy if he can't get sleep to-night," he said to Elizabeth. The boy's father and mother were desperate. Being "people of great possessions," they were discovering at last that there are things which money cannot buy.

In default of other assistance, a district nurse came daily to relieve Elizabeth for three hours during the afternoons. These hours she spent in sleep, or in seeking it, for other rest she had none. All the warm, long August and September nights she had been working over her patient, watching over him, with alert, anxious eye. She had neither time nor thought for anything else. The examinations to be and their result sank into insignificance. Her one desire was to help her patient back to life and health.

At last he had fallen asleep. The doctor who came at midnight drew Elizabeth outside the door of the sick-room. "If he can sleep a few hours, he's out of the woods; but if he should be wakened suddenly, by any mischance, it would kill him."

Elizabeth realized the seriousness of the situa-

tion. She crept to the bedside, and seating herself with a cautious softness, watched the dark, flushed face of the sleeper, not daring to move.

She sat thus stiffly for hours. Towards two in the morning she fancied she heard an unusual sound on the stairs, as of someone mounting them cautiously, but she knew that her nerves were overstrained, her hearing over-sensitive after so much anxious watching, and she set it down to her imagination.

A few minutes later she picked up from the bedside her watch, which lay ticking there. It was an exquisite bit of workmanship, set with diamonds, a relic of the old days of luxury and plenty. She began to count her patient's respiration. It was easy and regular, almost normal, she felt sure. As she counted she kept her eyes steadily on the minute hand. She heard a slight sound as of someone moving quite close to her, but did not glance up till she had taken the respiration fully.

When she did look up, it was to see, standing at the opposite side of the bed, a villainous-looking man with a revolver in his hand.

"Tell me where the silver is kept," he said in a rough whisper, "or I'll shoot!"

Elizabeth had always had an unreasoning terror of firearms, but now it seemed a small

thing to her that she should be threatened. Her only fear was for the sick boy. She did not scream or even quail before the evil look of the man before her.

She pointed to the patient calmly.

"He will die if he is wakened now," she whispered with suppressed eagerness, and very distinctly.

"Here, take my watch and go—quietly, mind, or I'll rouse the family." She held out the watch to him with swift decision.

The man snatched it from her, grinning coarsely. "Well, you *are* a game one!" he exclaimed, and with the treasure in his hand disappeared with practised, velvety step, down the stairs, and out through the side door.

Elizabeth drew a long, sighing breath. How dreadful it had been! What an evil creature had been there, close beside her! She longed to waken someone, to speak to someone of the dreadful occurrence, but she must not stir. There was too much danger of waking the lad. She sat there trembling like a leaf, her eyes fixed on the face of her patient, whom she had defended from death.

How long she sat there motionless, suffering tortures of nervous fear, of reaction after the strain, she never knew. It seemed a week to the girl—a week of martyrdom—but, when the pink

dawn light showed at last through the slats of the shutters, and the boy, opening his eyes a moment, closed them again peacefully in healthful repose, Elizabeth knew that she had "won through," and that the lad's life was indeed saved.

The papers next day told the story with variations, but little cared Elizabeth. Indeed, she was too utterly worn out in mind and body to care much for anything. A carriage was sent for her, and another nurse came to fill her place. Elizabeth had fallen ill from the too intense strain. She lay for weeks quite helpless.

Meantime the examinations were over and Elizabeth had missed writing. She went home like a soldier wounded in battle, much disheartened, never dreaming for a moment that she had played a heroine's part.

When she found on her dressing-table a plush box which contained the gold medal with her own name, "Elizabeth Runnier," engraved thereon, she laughed, thinking it a prank of Bobbie's, never dreaming that anything she had done had merited it, even if she had remembered that the award of the medal depended on excellence of work as well as on the written examinations.

"There she is, you see, Mother," said Grant, "a nurse, a knight-errant and a gold medallist all rolled into one!"

THE WAKING OF THE WOODS

WINTER lingered late. He considered himself a huge success, and having created something of a sensation, was loath to depart. He had made his *entrée* to the Canadian stage early in November in the blustering manner of the true braggart, and had succeeded in holding his audience breathlessly interested in his antics for four long months. He was met with scowls from the first, but these disheartened him not at all. Is it usual to fall in love with the villain of the piece?

The north wind breathed from his nostrils, roared in the chimneys of rich and poor, whistled through the pines and tore across the open prairies icily. The telegraph pole hummed with its unhappy minor strains, and the schoolboy's apple-red cheek not rarely showed a white frost-bite, as bright and early he trudged to school, hands deep in pockets, scarlet toque over ears, defying old Winter, battling with him merrily—a thoughtless young David, against an all-powerful Goliath.

"Hm-mm-mm! Oo-oo-oo!" whistled the wind,

swirling wildly over the snowy wastes of the north land, out across the prairies, southward to the bare-branched tree-tops of New Ontario forests, sweeping across to the Laurentian Hills. The waves of the Great Lakes found themselves caught, trammeled in their surging. Superior, the hitherto unconquered, wrestled furiously, heaped mountain-like crested waves, and dashed them madly at the intangible enemy who was trapping her, but of small avail. She was caught, grasped by an iron hand, and chained to her rocky shores till, weary of strife, she fell asleep.

Then, sated with his success, worn with mighty labors, Winter paused, and, breathing gently from the east, sent the snowflakes flying, silently lighting on the earth, clothing her in white. For weeks at intervals came the snow, at intervals the winds.

One February day the boaster relented, or appeared to relent, and stretching himself, dozed with one eye open, careless of the melting sunshine. Amid the gentle drip, drip of the icicles, and the crowing of cocks, he heard the voice of a clear-throated French girl singing to herself. She was seated in a market sleigh selling unromantic bunches of onions, but the promise of spring sounded in the gaily chanted notes and lay in her soft eyes, so that Winter felt distinctly

annoyed with the young person. He listened intently alert.

> "C'est le printemps,
> Sortons, aux champs!
> La campagne est fleurie!"

she sang. Winter chuckled wickedly.

"*Vous vous trompez, mademoiselle,*" growled he, "*Voyons!*" And with such energy did he rouse himself anew that on her homeward way that afternoon the French girl shivered miserably in her heavy coat, while the west wind drifted the newly fallen snow into great impassable heaps, sweeping the skirt of Earth's snow garment into endless graceful folds of shimmering whiteness, and drawing from the bare-branched maples a mournful wail of foreboding.

Thus he raged and blew and was looked upon with wonder by the people for another long month of days, and presumed in his arrogant mind that the time had come when he might hold undisputed sway for full half the year.

He had reckoned without his host, however, completely forgetting the ways of Spring, that saucy damsel. She danced in upon the stage on the first day of April, shaking from her skirts the faint, joyous fragrance of the earliest leaf-buds, and swamp willow catkins.

"You didn't wait for your cue," growled

Monsieur, feeling suddenly helpless before the young thing.

"Go away," remarked Spring, sweetly, "nobody loves you!"

"April fool!" he said, and tried to freeze her out, looking upon her coldly.

She answered his gaze innocently, smiling upon him with melting eyes. A crow, wide-winged, flapped lazily before her and suddenly settled on Winter's very shoulder. "Caw! caw! caw!" he cried with more *empressement* than grace.

It was more than even the severest Winter could stand. "Dear me," he remarked, "she has brought all her belongings with her evidently, and intends to stay." And with a cold and breezy sigh he beat an ill-humored retreat.

"Exit in a huff!" remarked the crow impudently. My lady Spring laughed softly and laid her wand to the earth. The little French girl caught the echo of the laugh and felt the magic touch thrilling to her finger-tips. She began her song again.

"Amis, accourons à la fête du printemps!" And all the sleepy growing things were quickened at the touch of Spring's light wand.

In the sugar-bush the sap stirred restlessly in the maples, welling up joyously from their deep hearts. The swamp willow hung out her catkins of silvery fur, the tree blossoms of the elm hud-

dled together in pale green bunches, the red maples bloomed amid the poplars.

At Blueberry Point the trailing arbutus wakened earliest of all wild things, reaching forth a tentative trailer from beneath her coverlet of reddish-brown pine needles. Her delicate pink and white flowers, hidden shyly beneath the tough, glossy leaves of last year, opened before the snowdrifts had disappeared from the hollows and shady places in the wood. Their fragrance, dream-like, indescribable, is the very essence of the springtime. In one of the marshy hollows of the meadow lying closest to the pine grove where arbutus blows, is a swamp where hordes of frogs set up a chorus of welcome to Spring. Their voices are full of springtide joy, croakingly expressed, as the manner of frogs is, their criterions of musical excellence differing essentially from ours.

The crows rivalled them.

"Caw! Caw! Wake up! Wake up!" they screamed rousingly, as they flew lazily overhead across the fields to the beech wood.

Here for days the sunlight had fallen between the dark stems of the leafless old beeches, warming the moist earth and coaxing the hepaticas up through the layers of brown leaves fallen there in the golden October days of last year. The hepaticas were sleepy. Willy-nilly, however, they

had to waken. The sun drew them till all at once they pushed their bent heads and silver-furred stems up through the leaf mould to the light of day, whole colonies of them, meeting the sun's gaze unblushingly, their star-like faces upturned.

Did the trilliums and dog-tooth violets hear of it, I wonder? Did the squirrel corn and spring beauty get wind of the early rising of the hepaticas? Something, at least, must have told them that they, too, must stir themselves, for two days later the adder's-tongues sent up pale yellow and green buds and the trilliums on the hillside unsheathed their treasured lily flowers and glorified the slope with hundreds of their white three-petalled chalices.

Near the top of the hill, still bare of grass and fern, a little spring gurgled and leaped from a strange crevice in the rock, chiselled by Nature into such weird likeness to mouth and chin that it was named by the school children of long ago "The Man's Lip," when dusty and thirsty with wild-flower hunting, they used to crumple small brown hands into cup shape and, holding them under the narrow, crystal-clear stream, drink thirstily. By the river, thousands of violets, till now lying low in the springing grass, reached up slender necks, outstripping the grasses. They knew it was time to blow, and in a day dotted the

earth with heavenly blueness. Is it blue, or is it purple? Neither, perhaps, but something more delicious, more wonderful than either. Looking at them one has almost no need for the sky, so satisfying is their hue, so enchanting their manner of springing up happily in the grass.

To the west of the beech wood, and far below the hill of the " Man's Lip," lies Beaver Meadow, where the marsh marigolds budded—" Brave marshmary buds, rich and yellow," up to their kingly chins in water. One fair May day they will open their golden cups wide for the sun to fill with flame. Some other time, too, the moccasin plant will blow here, and the ferns uncurl their tender young fronds in shady coolness, and on the rocky hillside columbine and harebell will swing airily on wind-blown stalks.

But in earliest May these are happenings of the future. Meanwhile, a white-throated sparrow, far away, pipes across the spaces of sunshine and shade, his inimitable cadence—

" Sweet—Sweet—Canada, Canada, Canada!"

Almost at the same moment a schoolboy's clear treble calls " Coo-ee!" to the echoes. He belongs to the woods as the other wild things do. He knows the thrill of the spring and has come to his rightful heritage.

The woods are wide awake.

DOWN THE TIMBER SLIDES ON A CRIB

The day we went down the slides! Magic words! The very memory of it thrills one delightfully!

To begin with the weather—the day of our trip was real Canadian weather, which in September means blue—intensely blue—sky, sunshine that warms (as the Irish say) the very cockles of your heart, and

"The clear, sweet air that blows
In this garden of the castle of Our Lady of the Snows."

To begin at the very beginning, three of us walked down the winding country road that lies between the flat meadows of Westboro, and leads at last to the shores of the Ottawa. There, at the end of the road, we beheld the great raft of square-hewn timber, circled with a "boom" of chain-linked logs, and snubbed securely to two stumps at the water's edge by means of thick hempen ropes. Campbell, the foreman of the gang of raftsmen—an Englishman, curiously enough—was to be seen hurriedly pulling on

what appeared to be a most refractory coat, judging from the agitated manner in which he wrestled with it. He had seen the approaching ladies, and evidently felt that a blue-checked shirt was a trifle too *négligé* a costume in which to do the honors of the raft.

He welcomed us warmly, and, observing that a certain Lady Faintheart of our number cast doubtful glances at the watery gulf, some six feet wide, that yawned between raft and shore, he placed across the gap a huge and unplaned oar, on which impromptu bridge, narrow and extremely elastic, we one by one got safely aboard the raft.

"I'm sorry," explained Campbell, apologetically, "but you're a bit late. The first lot of men have started with six cribs, and as they have to take them down below the bridge where they are to be snubbed, and then walk home by the shore, you'll have pretty near an hour and a half to wait."

Now, no one enjoys missing a train—or a crib either; and to few it is given to hear with pleasure of an unexpected and inevitable delay. The cloud, however, had a silver lining; we were free now to ramble at pleasure over the raft, crawling and hopping by turns over the great dividing timbers, while we listened to words of wisdom

and information from Campbell. Lady Faintheart's delight was evident. She has a quenchless thirst for facts, and her conversation is usually sprinkled liberally with interrogation points.

Let me pass on some of the curious bits of information which we received in answer to Lady Faintheart's questions, and say to the uninitiated that a crib is a small portion of a raft, in fact a miniature raft in itself, consisting of twenty logs or more, dovetailed and pegged and chained and nailed together, the ten lower ones lying parallel with one another and forming a floor to the crib, bound together by others laid at right angles to them, three of the largest timbers always lying lengthwise of the crib. These form seats for idle adventurers like ourselves, who need not stand to wield the heavy, ungainly oars, which in their impromptu wooden rowlocks may be found on all four sides of the crib.

One hundred and ninety-three of these cribs formed our raft. The whole had been sold for $200,000, and was now being floated on its way to Quebec harbor, where log by log the huge mass would be hauled into the holds of great Atlantic vessels, to be carried to English shores.

Faintheart's big blue eyes opened wide as she heard this. "Two hundred thousand dollars!"

she gasped; "why, where did you find all the wood?"

Where?

High up the lonely headwaters of the little Du Moine sixty shanty-men had worked all the long, cold winter. They had felled the great pines, and with skilful axes had squared the logs so evenly that one would fancy they had been through a sawmill.

Paths had been cleared through the forest, and through these the great logs were drawn one at a time by sturdy French-Canadian ponies—"bouriques." A great "rollway" was prepared, itself made of logs, and down its long slope the timbers were slid into the river.

Singly they floated down the little Du Moine, and out into the Ottawa. Then one day, after they had floated three hundred and fifty—perhaps four hundred—miles, the raft was built of those 3,860 logs, the thirty tiny cabins were erected thereupon, and the kitchen and its fireplace made.

By the time Campbell reached this point in his description, Faintheart's eyes and mouth were open, and she was bursting with twenty questions saved up during the harangue. The cabins interested her deeply.

"But—but how—how do they live in such wee houses?" she inquired.

That was the question. We examined one of the said wee houses, and found it to be exactly six and a half feet long, by four feet high and four broad. A window six inches square lighted and ventilated it, a gabled roof, shingled, kept out the rain. In this, as in each of the other twenty-nine cabins, two men passed their short sleeping hours. It was better than a Chinese puzzle to decide how two burly rivermen and their accompanying blankets could manage this.

Our wonderings were, however, cut short by the announcement that dinner awaited us in the kitchen.

More scrambling and vaulting over the logs, and then—pork and beans!

The kitchen consisted of a partial roof (only partial, for a wide hole in it served as a chimney) and a fireplace. Sides it had not, tables it had not, benches or chairs it had not. And why should it have? Dominique presided over the two huge black caldrons suspended by chains from a tripod, under which the great fire, made on a bed of sand, blazed and crackled, causing the contents of the pots to bubble and fizzle delightfully. Dominique's manner was princely in its hospitality.

We seated ourselves on the floor near the fire, while he vociferously ordered his assistant, a

stolid Indian boy, to provide us with the first course. The boy raised the cover of the larger caldron, and, amid a cloud of steam, spooned out our rations liberally on to tin plates. Talk of nectar and ambrosia! Only those who have tasted hot pork and beans on a raft, after skipping about from log to log, for an hour or so, can appreciate the ravenous appetite we exhibited.

The pork and beans were followed by bread, cheese and tea—bread fresh from the hot sand in which it had been baked, yellow cheese, and green tea, well boiled.

Suddenly there was a sound of footsteps approaching by land. The rivermen who had taken the six cribs through the rapids, joined by others, who had been holidaying for an hour or two in the village, were coming to their dinner.

Ten minutes and the dinner of those sixty men, French-Canadians, Indians and half-breeds, was finished, and laughing and shouting, the men came vaulting lightly over the logs, making with ease, with the aid of their spiked poles, great springs across the timbers, vaulting easily ten feet, and alighting surely on the log aimed for.

We were put in charge of Narcisse, the oldest pilot on the Upper Ottawa, half French, half Indian, and in fifteen minutes more we were

safely embarked with him and his two assistants. While he pushed us off from the surrounding cribs with his iron boathook, there was a chorus from the watching raftsmen of:

"Bon voyage! Garde bien les demoiselles, Narcisse!" Then suddenly, with a lilt and swing that the French alone can give it, came the song:

"Derrier' chez nous, y a-t-un étang,
En roulant ma boule.
Trois beaux canards s'en vont baignant,
En roulant ma boule,
Rouli, roulant, ma boule roulant,
En roulant ma boule roulant,
En roulant ma boule!"

The strong voices coming over the water made one, in some indescribable way, forget present days and sail away in fancy to the old days of New France.

Our clever Narcisse stood straight as an arrow, despite his fifty-five years.

"Ah, yes, mad'moiselle," he was saying, modestly, "I'm on dis riviere y'a forty year. I know her ver' well by now!"

"Lak her? Oh, my, yes! I lak her too much!" As he talked he was propelling the clumsy craft out into mid-stream to catch the current, he at one oar, Baptiste and Moise at the other. He could boast a biceps and triceps that many a col-

lege athlete would envy. The high instep that showed in the low shoes, betrayed his Indian blood. The fine deep wrinkles about eye and mouth were those one sees in most seamen and pilots: responsible wrinkles, that come with weathering the gale, and observing keenly every caprice of wind and wave.

Once out in mid-stream, even the energetic Narcisse sat down to rest, as we floated gently down the broad Ottawa. Lady Faintheart sat on the middle timber, her skirts gathered daintily about her.

I sat on the floor propped against a side log and gazed up at the sky—a wide, blue field, with a flock of fleecy, lamb-like clouds scattered about. Ramona's words came to me as I looked:

"For one year," said Ramona, "I should lie and look up at the sky, my Alessandro; it hardly seems as though it could be a sin to do nothing for a whole year, if you gazed steadily at the sky all the time."

I asked the Other Person of our party if he agreed with Ramona. He dashed my notions of his character to the ground as he replied:

"No, I don't. I should think not. Nobody would agree with her but a very lazy person."

"Thank you so much," I murmured, gratefully, "I agree with her most heartily. Only

I would look at the mountains, too," I added, as my gaze fell on the dear Laurentians in the distance, with the purplish September haze veiling them.

At this point my attention was drawn to Faintheart, who had slid from her perch to the floor of the raft and was jogging my elbow excitedly.

"Listen to him—to the pilot," she said whispering. He evidently had the teasing instinct strong in him, this brown-cheeked, black-eyed Narcisse.

"Certainement," he was saying, "we go over de Chaudiere Falls—de Beeg Kettle you call him: did'n' you know that w'en you come?"

Narcisse chuckled gaily.

"No, no, we don't, do we? Oh, I can't—I won't. Oh, please, Monsieur Narcisse, je suis, je suis—"

Faintheart's voice and eyes prophesied possible tears, so we proceeded to reassure her.

We turned a bend in the river and found ourselves close to the rapids.

"Now, mesd'moiselles, de rapeed come! Prenez-garde! Hol' on tight on de big stick in de middle," cried our pilot, leaping from one side of the crib to the other with the agility and alertness of

a young tiger, as he prodded with his pole a stray floating log, then leaped to the oars.

"Ha! Moise, vite! mon enfant. Depêche-toi, Ba'tiste, depêche-toi là!"

Through the spray and the splash of the rapids we spun, jolting on jutting rocks, flung from side to side with glorious abandon. Narcisse leaped about, first at one oar then at another, shouting directions hoarsely, and anxiously scanning the water ahead, at one time the two assistants and Narcisse all at one oar—two pushing, one pulling, as they strained every muscle.

"Ah," muttered the old pilot, drawing his arm across his eyes, "dat work's not h'easy, pas du tout!"

We shouted with exhilaration and the pure joy of it all—the excitement, the air on the water, everything made one happy.

On our right now we saw the Parliament Buildings, their stately towers rearing themselves against the hazy sky. The cliff below was bright with early turning foliage, all red and russet and gold. On our left hand, Hull, bare and commonplace, and beyond it again, the Laurentians.

Near Hull the voices of longshoremen greeted Baptiste and Narcisse joyfully.

"Ah, comment ce va, mon p'tit garçon?" he shouted heartily, as we moved slowly under the mill bridge.

Now for the slides! How we laughed and even screamed in prospect. Faintheart trembled.

Swish-sh-sh!

One swift, sudden slippery descent—a bump, a huge splash, and a soaking shower of cold river water, and we were down the first slide. Now for another! and another!

One's breath caught in sheer delight in the swift motion.

At the foot, the good habitants regarded us smilingly. "Dat bettair dan de beeg kettle, n'est-ce-pas?" remarked Narcisse to Faintheart, as he caught his boathook in the log-lined shore and drew us in.

Suddenly we realized that it was all over. Dismay filled our hearts as Moise jumped to shore and snubbed our cribs securely. We were handed to the shore with that grace and politeness which comes by instinct to the Frenchman of whatever station, and found ourselves on *terra firma* once more.

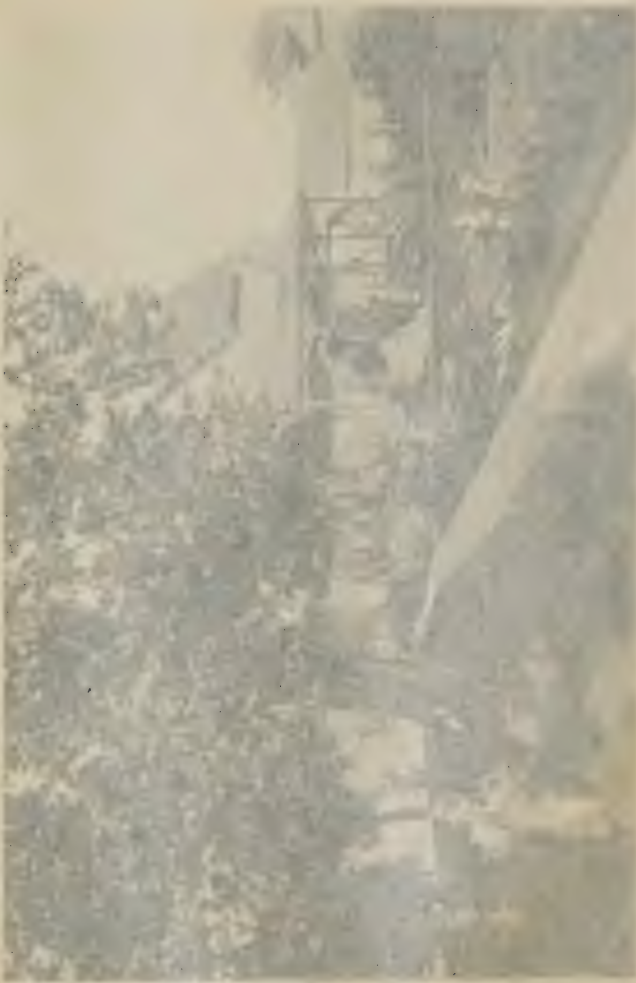
"TRAILING CLOUDS OF GLORY"

(*Being the record of a child's afternoon.*)

> "Trailing clouds of glory do we come
> From God who is our home."
>
> —*Wordsworth.*

One angel who trailed them sat in the middle of the croquet lawn, which was starred with yellow dandelions and mottled with the leafy shadows cast by a wide-branched old linden tree, which grew at the south end of the lawn.

When the angel looked up at the sound of a squirrel's chattering overhead she could see nothing but dark, gnarled branches, and broad round linden leaves green against the sunny blue of the sky. It was a pretty, pretty world, and made, she felt half-consciously, for her particular benefit. She was only six years of age, so it is not surprising that her wings still remained invisible. Indeed, there were times within the memory of man when her nurse, Miss Betsey McGrath, late of Ireland, would have considered horns and a tail more fitting adjuncts to her small person than the angelic feathers; but these occasions were rare and happily brief.



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"THE LINDENS."

The home of the author's grandparents.

In fact, the angel was almost as clever at the dual personality business as the famous Dr. Jekyll himself. Cleverer, perhaps, when one comes to think of it, for there were three of her, to wit—the Angel, Her Satanic Majesty, and Mrs. Jerusalem.

Mrs. Jerusalem was the mother of a large and healthy family of dolls, and it was she (begging the Angel's pardon) who sat under the linden tree that fair summer afternoon. Her family were seated at a small, red painted kindergarten table close by her side. They appeared to be partaking of a slight *déjeuner* while their parent watched anxiously for lapses in table etiquette. At the farther end of the table sat the eldest son of the family, Jack, a rakish-looking youth whose costume and general appearance led one to believe that he had followed the sea in his early days. Evidently a sad dog, he slouched forward carelessly at the table and gazed with an impudently supercilious expression at his sister Rosaline, whose white woolly locks suggested an albino ancestry. Suddenly a dizziness seemed to seize the reprobate. He leaned over unsteadily to one side and toppled completely, his china nose crashing ignominiously into his plate of jam.

"Jacky Jerusalem!" exclaimed his parent in

horror-stricken tones; "is that the way a gempelman behaves at luncheon? Not when I was a little girl! Your manners is *servantly!*"

Mrs. Jerusalem rose hastily, her short white frock sticking out stiff and crumpled above a pair of fat, bare legs. She picked up her son who lay stunned, his head in his plate, and proceeded to administer justice in summary fashion. Her exertions made her quite red in the face, for not only was it incumbent on her to chastise the son of her bosom, but also to produce the wails suitable to the occasion.

"Naughty — naughty — naughty boys what falls into jam don't never go to heaven!" she interjected, punctuating her words with chastening hand. The sawdust poured from a gaping wound in Jacky's arm, but he appeared indifferent. It was a tame ending to the scene.

A butterfly, all gold and brown, floated airily past her head. In a moment the rôle of Mrs. Jerusalem was cast to the winds; Jacky was flung prone to the earth, and the Angel was flying in hot pursuit of the delicate, lazily-moving creature. Up a long, sunny gravel path she chased it, her golden hair making a halo for her bare head, her wide, shade hat hanging at her back by its elastic; down the shady lane that ran close to the back garden fence, where the

rhubarb grew rank, and where crabapple trees spread their low, knotty branches wide, and reached across the picket fence and into the enchanted country of "next door."

The butterfly alighted at last on a fragrant spray of wild currant low enough for the Angel to reach. She whipped off her hat and pounced with the trapping instinct which still lingers unabated in the human breast, but the flying thing eluded her and sailed away light-winged, leaving an eager little white-clad figure standing on tiptoe and gazing earnestly at that point in the fence over which her prey had disappeared.

Where had he gone? Where did he live? Did he like being a butterfly?

The Angel picked a rhubarb leaf and fanned her small, flushed face with it, while she considered these unanswerable questions. She sauntered back to the lawn swinging her hat by its elastic. On the way she brushed against a clump of spearmint that grew at the angle of two paths, and its spicy fragrance made her remember something—she could not quite remember what—something about chasing butterflies there before when she was quite a tiny child—oh, years ago!

It was warm. She flung herself down on the smooth grass of the lawn at the edge of the linden

tree's shadow, and lay blinking up at the sky with heavenly eyes. A delicate little cloud or two drifted peacefully in the blueness. "Where did the little clouds come from?" she wondered. Were they baby angels flying about and playing up there? Perhaps some day she would be a dear little white cloud—a truly little angel—if she were good, oh, very, very good, like the little girl that—

"Gabrielle! Gay! Where are you?" Jimmy McShane, the gardener's son, dropped agilely over the fence which divided the vegetable field from the garden, and came running towards the Angel. He was eight years old, and wore a blue-checked gingham shirt, a trifle patched, and blue denim knickerbockers, suspended by real braces. His hair was sandy, his nose of the rétroussé variety, an altogether charming combination to Gabrielle's mind. She admired him fervently, and Jimmy adored her. Their reasons for this mutual admiration differed widely—naturally.

The Angel admired Jimmy because of his age, which exceeded her own by two years; because he could climb trees and turn somersaults, and because he had freckles, which she considered a desirable form of facial adornment, whereas Jimmy adored the Angel because he was rarely allowed to play with her, because she considered

his tree-climbing and somersaults as feats, and because in his small, reverent, Irish heart there was an inborn admiration and respect for "the quality," to which august body, he had been assured many times by his father, "Miss Gabrielle" belonged.

"Gay," he called; "Miss Gay, where are ye, sure?"

"Here, Jimmy. Here!"

An alert and inquiring Angel, ready for any contingency, ran to him swinging her long-suffering hat.

"Pa's afther tellin' 'bout the circus, Miss Gay, an' I'm goin' till it this mortal minute. Come an wid me, if ye like!"

Gay regarded him doubtfully, not sure of her subject.

"Where there's p'cessions?"

"No, no, sure the percessions is all over, but it's the circus, with the sarpints an'—"

"And girrafts and campbells, Jimmy?"

"Yes, sure, an' bears and lines an' ladies that ate snakes, and everythin' else. Come an, Miss Gay!"

"Little girls can't go by theirselves to circuses, an' Mummy's away, an' Betsey won't let's."

"Aw, Miss Gay, you ast Betsey nice; ast her rale swate like, an' she'll let ye."

"You ask Betsey, Jimmy!"

"No, you ast her yerself, Miss Gay. Quick, there's a good girl!"

"No, you. Aw, Jimmy!"

"Well, well—we'll count, and whoiver it comes to's got to ast her."

The Angel awaited the decision of the oracle with solemnity:

> "Inty, minty, fig o' tay,
> Il dil dominay;
> Orky porky stole a rock,
> Inty, minty, dickety dock.
> O-u-t spells out."

"There, Miss Gabrielle, it's you has to ask Betsey, darlint."

The Angel's lip quivered ominously. "Betsey won't let me go. She's cross."

"Aw, well, niver mind, sure. Lave her alone thin an' we'll go ourselves."

This was a new and delightful alternative. Gay looked bewitched with joy. She laughed breathlessly.

"Let's!" she exclaimed, with a smothered little shriek of delight, and catching hands the pair ran down the shady avenue, and out at the old white gate to the hot, dusty road, while their two hearts beat high with expectation and the perils of the enterprise.

The road was very long, very dusty, very warm.

"Will we soon be there, Jimmy?" Gay had inquired several times, repressing a tired little shake in her voice, but at last the happy hunting-grounds had been reached. Crowds of people were streaming across a large field, where the great white circus tents lay in the blazing sun. Gay grasped Jimmy's hand nervously as they walked in the midst of the throng. As they neared the entrance to the largest tent a man with greasy black hair and a rasping, twanging voice, was calling out blatantly:

"Come, ladies and gentlemen, here's where you secure your programmes for the greatest show on earth. Buy a programme, ladies, that you may know what is going on and what is taking place!"

Something about the sound of the man's voice frightened the Angel indescribably. It was all so strange, so foreign to her, this crowd, the queer people, the nasty voices. She clung to her protector's hand, wordlessly.

"Tickets, please!" another strident voice was calling just at the door of the tent.

"Tickets! Have your tickets ready, ladies and gentlemen!"

Tickets! Jimmy gasped. He had forgotten

that one had to *pay*. He caught Gay's sleeve and pulled her forcibly out of the crowd into an open space. He explained the situation sorrowfully, feeling himself a miserable failure, almost forgetting his own keen disappointment in trying to soothe hers.

"Oh, Jimmy!" she cried in a disappointed, bitter little wail; "I am so tired an' I didn't know I was till you told me about the tickets. An' my slipper hurts, but it hurts worse about the girrafts and bears."

Jimmy choked back an inconvenient lump in his throat.

"Sure if yer slipper's hurtin' yez we c'n take it aff of ye. There, sit down on the grass, Miss Gabrielle, darlint, an' I'll take it aff for ye! Barefoot's the best, anny way. There!"

He removed with painstaking care a little dusty slipper, and Gay limped along wearily, one white stocking in the dust.

He had found a sheltered spot near a spare, cone-shaped cedar tree that grew opposite the lemonade booth, and leading the limping little Angel to it, seated her on the grass there. She was tired and very thirsty, but would not descend to the babyishness of tears. She knew now how thirsty poor Elijah must have felt that time in the desert. Betsey had told her about him. Poor Elijah!

She wondered if, by any chance, he had had to sit opposite a lemonade booth when he was so thirsty, watching people drinking beautiful pink lemonade—a much more delicious and more *recherché* variety than Betsey or even one's own mother could make. The Angel's spirits flagged. She had expected fairyland. The glamour which had surrounded circuses had vanished entirely. It had all been a bitter disappointment.

Jimmy knitted a freckled brow in thought, while he pensively nibbled a stalk of grass. What was to be done next? Gay regarded him in forlorn inquiry.

"Jove!" exclaimed a manly voice behind him. "By Jove, if that isn't Margaret Driffield's small sister. What under the sun—"

"Valancey!" cried a small voice, brimful of joyous welcome, as the Angel cast herself precipitately upon the youth.

Valancey Roswell picked up the small, forlorn person, who clasped his clean linen collar with joyful abandon. Then he looked sternly down and asked for explanations from the freckle-faced escort.

These must have proved sufficiently satisfactory, for in an incredibly short time Jimmy McShane found himself safely ushered past the

greasy gentleman at the entrance, who insisted so cruelly upon people's producing tickets, and seated on a delightfully uncertain circus grand-stand, by Valancey Roswell's side.

As for Her Satanic Majesty, she sat, wreathed in smiles, on the accommodating Roswell's knee, gazing about her with wicked excitement. Such a lark! What would Betsey say if she could see her now!

The clowns were charming. She could not always quite catch what they said, but it made her laugh anyway. She was distracted to know which ring to watch, for there were three rings. Whether to watch the elephant, who was having his tea, and not behaving very well—just like the young Jerusalems—or whether to watch the lady in green who was about to slide from the top of the tent by her teeth, or whether to watch the ponies. Ah, yes! she loved the ponies, and the tight-rope ladies, but best of all—(oh, far best)—did she love the Queen of Sheba!

This lady came in towards the end of the performance. First, King Solomon and his retainers and his dancing girls, then camels and riders and slaves waving feather fans, and then the Queen of Sheba, gorgeously apparelled in green and pink sateen, flashing with tinsel and tin sequins. Gay drew a long breath of supreme sat-

isfaction. A real princess, like those in the fairy tales.

> "Superfine lemonade
> In the shade. Ten cents."

The pink lemonade was coming around on a tray, the glasses clinking deliciously.

Jimmy looked appealingly at Gay. "Pink lemonade and popcorn!" he whispered, but Gay's thoughts refused to come to earth!

She turned with adoring eyes from her heroine to Roswell.

"Valancey, dear, isn't she sweet? Did you ever see such a pretty person before?"

Valancey bit his lip and looked in the distance for inspiration.

"Never!" he said fervently.

But the Angel hardly heard his reply. She was watching the pageant with rapt expression. One idea dominated her—the glory of being the Queen of Sheba in a circus. She had decided upon a career for herself.

Conversation flagged on the way home. Gay was pondering deeply as Roswell carried her in his strong arms. There was Betsey McGrath still to be appeased. As Roswell put the child down at the gate she tucked a warm little hand into his confidingly. She hoped for his protection against Betsey's onslaughts.

"Valancey, dear, you were sweet to take us. Come up and see Margaret," she said.

One strapped slipper was still missing, and she was very tired, but—what did it matter? She had been to fairyland and her soul was satisfied.

The Jerusalem family were still seated under the linden tree when the wanderers returned. A wild-eyed Betsey met them half-way down the avenue, and caught the Angel to her ample and starchy bosom.

"Aroon!" she murmured, "is it back ye are to yer owld Betsey, darlint. Come wid Betsey an' have yer teas, my blessed lambs!"

"Betsey, dear, I love you very much!" whispered the Angel, her head pillowed against Betsey's apron-bib.

This was her outward speech. The true inwardness of her thoughts at that moment was otherwise.

"Be good and you will be lonesome," says Mark Twain.

"If you are only naughty enough your nurse (even if it's Betsey) will forget to be cross to you," thought the Angel.

THE FEUD IN PENETANG LANE

> "*Oh, it's Mister Dooley, Mister Dooley,*
> *Mister Dooley—ooly—oo!*
> *It's Mister Dooley, Mist——.*"

YOUNG barefooted Patsy McBride's shrill song was brought to an untimely end by the vision which burst upon him of his mother doing the family washing in the open air, her tubs drawn up beside the clump of sunflowers which grew close by the kitchen doorstep.

Patsy's Irish eyes opened wide in a surprise not wholly pleasurable, for he and the friend of his bosom, Hilaire Potvin, having scaled the backyard fence with *malice prepense,* had crept cautiously from its ledge on to the low, spreading branches of Mrs. McBride's cherished Duchess apple tree, and now clung there sheepishly, petrified before the wrathful stare of the apple tree's proprietor.

"'Misther Dooley,' is it!" she cried, regarding her small son and his friend with disfavor, as she pushed back with soapy hand a stray lock of her burnished red hair; "look at that now, wud ye, the two imps of thim, afther me good cookin'

apples. Hilaire Potvin, if iver I catch ye, wanst more, over here afther apples or annythin' whatsoiver—*wanst more,* mind—I have the police to ye."

She shook her fist in hostile manner, and moved a threatening step nearer the apple tree. "Coom down out av that, the two av yez, or I'll help ye down!" she cried, her voice raised to its angriest pitch.

Hilaire Potvin needed no second invitation. He regretted fervently the luscious apples which were not to be his, but the moment required but one course of action. His bare legs and ragged garments disappeared rapidly over the fence, which divided the territory of Potvin from the McBride patrimony.

Patsy, thus deserted, dropped to the ground and stood looking at his mother with indecision in his long-lashed blue eyes. The maternal justice had not yet been administered, and he wot not what form it might take.

Mrs. McBride stood before her tubs, a hand on each hip, majestically waiting.

"Pathrick McBride," said she in irate inquiry, "will ye coom here to me this minnit, or will I help ye along wid the stick? It 'ud be in flyin' leps ye'd coom *thin,* I warrant ye. Take that, ye young spalpeen, an' you goin' wid thim low,

ignerent varmints of Potvins whin I bid ye not!" she cried, reaching forth a brawny arm to administer a salutary box on the ear, but Patsy, old in such experiences, by making a slight detour, skilfully avoided the thrust, and was making his escape down the path worn in the grass, before his mother realized that both opportunity and boy were fled.

Mrs. McBride gazed after him indignantly, then glanced at that spot in the Potvin outworks where Hilaire had disappeared.

Unfortunately, at that very moment, Madame Potvin emerged from the darkness of her kitchen door, carrying a large basket of spotlessly white clothes, freshly wet from the rinsing water. She mounted an empty packing-case, near the fence, the better to spread the shining array of her washing on the clothesline which radiated from a high pole in the fence. Her short, slight figure thus came into full view of her Irish neighbor, who was bent laboriously over her washboard, scrubbing the clothes on it with the vehemence of still simmering wrath.

"Ah," smiled the mother of Hilaire, in her pretty French manner, "Good-day, madame, I 'ope you ver' well?"

Bridget McBride looked grim.

"Good marnin', ma'am," she said, with an uncompromising severity, wiping her crimson face with her blue-checked apron. "I'd ast ye, Mrs. Potvin, do ye remimber what I'm afther sayin' to yer man two days back? 'Twas this thin: 'Misther Potvin,' says I, 'will ye plaze to keep that young spalpeen Hilaire out av my childer's ways,' says I, 'as his manners is not all that cu'd be desired,' says I, 'an' I'd prefer that my offspring would not be consortin' wid the likes of him,' says I. And have ye forgot that quick and aisy, ma'am, that yer bowld b'y was over to me apple tree this marnin', no less, aitin' all me good cookin' apples on me, him an' Patsy betune thim!"

The smile in the eyes of little madame vanished under the volley of words. She drew her small figure to its full height, and flushed proudly.

"No, madame," she said, "I don't forget dose ting, but I tink dat time, Madame McBride, she's not know w'at her say wen she so angry, w'en she say those word on my poor Hilaire. Now I tell you! Hilaire, heem good boy; heem Frenchman, wot has *toujours* the most fine mannairs, yet more fine, maybe, dan dose Airish peep'."

"Och, thin, is *that* the talk! Well, well! kape

him to hisself thin, same as the *rest* av the quality does wid their childer. Kape him to hisself, the grasshopper greenhorn."

There was inimitable scorn in the face and voice of Mrs. McBride as she said it. Little madame trembled and grew white to the lips with suppressed anger.

"Voyez, Madame Meek Bride," she cried, excitedly, "you see, I am modder dat Hilaire. Heem good boy most times. Heem love his modder lak Patsy love his modder. You please, never *jamais—faut jamais* talk *comme ça—.*" Her English was forsaking her, and as she tremblingly pinned the corners of a gorgeous pink and white patch-work quilt to the line, she poured forth volumes in her native tongue. Then, turning to her neighbor, her lips aquiver, she wickedly dropped a mock curtesy, and springing lightly from her perch on the packing-case, she retreated under fire to the shelter of her own roof.

"Behowld ye, now!" soliloquized Mrs. McBride, watching the departing figure; "sure it's mesilf as 'ill never look crossways at her agin, so long's I live. It 'ud be beneath me to do it, s'help me Heaven!"

An hour later when a thunder shower blew up, which obliged Mrs. McBride to move her heavy

tubs indoors, and Mrs. Potvin to rush out wildly to gather in the snowy garments which fluttered dry and gleeful in the breeze, the two women, having performed these necessary labors, shut their respective back doors with a vindictiveness and a finality very symbolic of the existing strained relations.

Mrs. McBride was wont to observe in the course of casual conversation that, "savin' yer prisence, and though she did say it as shouldn't, himself was doin' none so bad just now, bein' boss of the dhrain-diggin' for the new town main, an' kapin' aff of the dhrink—'twas wonderful." All of which was true up to a certain point.

Unfortunately, the very Monday evening of the encounter between his wife and her neighbor, Bill McBride, having received his wages at six o'clock, saw fit to spend the same on Monday night in lordly fashion at McKillop's tavern. For this reason McBride, *père,* had neglected to lock up with his usual caution the chest containing the keg of powder, and the fuse ends used in the blasting of the drain.

When, therefore, young Patrick issued from his home next day, into the dewy freshness of the morning air, he descried the said box lying carelessly open just outside the door of the lean-to woodshed.

Sudden delight, mischief and fear struggled in his eyes. There was a moment of indecision. Then the Rubicon was crossed. Patsy was off like a shot to the Potvin precincts. Warnings as to the fate awaiting him if he continued to associate with his friend rolled off him as easily as water off a duck's back. The Tartar-like quality existing in his mother's disposition, intermixed with the warm goodwill of her Irish heart, troubled Patsy not at all as long as it remained an abstract idea. When it was very concretely brought to his mind during the course of a "lickin'," it caused him much anguish, but the frequent prophecies of future lickings were of no moment to him.

He climbed the fence cautiously, making no more noise in the agile performance of the feat than would a velvet-pawed kitten. He sprang lightly to the ground and crept close to the walls of the little unpainted wooden house, with its windows gay with thrifty scarlet geraniums in pots and tomato tins. No one was stirring. Arriving beneath the open, small-paned window of Hilaire's bedchamber over the low kitchen, he whistled softly a bar or two of the ubiquitous "Mr. Dooley," and listened for an answer. In a moment a shock of dark curly hair appeared at the window, and Hilaire's sleepy brown eyes looked out.

"Hello, Patsy, w'at's h'up? W'at you want so early? W'ere you gon' on?"

"Shut up and howld yer noise, Potvin, or ye'll waken thim all. Coom on down 'n' I'll tell ye," whispered Patsy, hoarsely, glancing nervously about, "the two of us is goin' to do some fine blastin' an' have a quare lot of fun!"

The tousled head at the window vanished. There was a short interval, during which Hilaire scrambled into his clothes, while Patsy sat thoughtfully on the doorstep making patterns in the sand with a bare toe, and weaving in his mind the story of the dramatic enterprise on which he and his friend were about to embark.

He was mentally arranging to his satisfaction, that they two, being prisoners in a gruesome dungeon (the drain would answer the purpose), would, after much weird and awful plotting, blow up the entire prison on the chance of recovering their own freedom. His dreams were interrupted by Hilaire's gingerly unlocking the back door and joining him.

Patsy elaborately explained the situation to his friend, as, having secured the requisite powder, fuse and matches, the two sauntered down Penetang Lane to the spot where the excavating was being carried on. The two conspirators clambered down into the ditch, which as yet was

not more than four or five feet in depth, and looked about till they found a half finished drill hole in the rock, which they had noticed the previous day.

Patsy went about the setting of the fuse with a show of being fully accustomed to his work. "Shure, t'aint anny too deep, thin," he muttered dubiously, as he poured the powder into the shallow cylindrical hole. He placed over it a piece of dried grass sod, and tamped it with small, broken stones.

His manner now changed from the practical to the melodramatic.

" Now, comrade, it's ourselves as is goin' to do the deadly deed. Gimme a match and we'll blow up the hull prison!"

Hilaire stood with his grimy little hands in the pockets of his much-patched knickerbockers, watching the other anxiously.

Patsy was bending low to light the fuse.

" Paddy, Paddy, don' you go so clos' to it!" he cried, turning to shinny up the wall of the drain.

The Irish boy had hardly time to scramble, panic-stricken, to the top of the ditch, when a wreath of blue smoke curled up from the fuse. Suddenly, there was a roar, a noise in their ears as of the rending of the earth, and the sound of a thousand seas. They were blind and deaf, and

in a moment the two little half-lifeless figures of Patrick McBride and Hilaire Potvin lay white-faced and bleeding beside the mouth of the drain.

When little Madame Potvin ran down the lane, her scarlet blouse open at the throat, her usually neatly-coiffed, dark hair rippling down her back, and gasping out weakly, "Oh w'at has arrive, w'at has arrive on dat *garçon!*" she beheld her enemy of the evening before seated close to the margin of the ditch, holding Patsy's head in her lap, while she stanched the bleeding in Hilaire's foot with an impromptu bandage torn from her own checked apron. Bridget McBride's face was blanched with a nameless dread, but with the pluck that is the portion of mothers, she set to work to remedy matters before indulging her grief. A little crowd had gathered around her; someone ran for the doctor.

The young surgeon made his way through the cluster of excited villagers, and looked with hasty observation at the two limp little bodies. Patsy's condition was serious, he feared. He made a swift examination of the boy. With his skilful thumbs he opened one of the closed eyelids and scrutinized the eyeball. He felt the lad's pulse.

"Carry him home to bed—gently, mind," said the doctor; "I'll be there presently."

Several willing arms were held out to help carry the boy home, but his mother did not see them. She fiercely gathered Patsy in her strong, tender arms and strode away with him.

Bridget McBride laid her boy on a clean white bed, and hung over him in hopeless, helpless devotion. The white face of the child terrified her. Was her boy, her Patsy, going to die? She suffered in a mute agony. Then, seating herself by the bedside, on a rude wooden chair, and rocking to and fro, she moaned bitterly, "Oh wurra, wurra, wurra, och hone, och hone!" She repeated it over and over again, with the instinct of the Celt to keen over the wounded and dying.

Half an hour wore itself out wearily before she heard the doctor's step on the gravel under the little window.

She held herself quiet, apparently composed, while the doctor worked over the lad, gave him a stimulant with his gleaming hypodermic needle, lowered the pillow under his head, tested the sensitiveness of the spine, felt the pulse again.

When he had gone, Bridget's stiff lips refused speech, but her eyes appealingly asked the question for her.

The doctor turned with a reassuring smile.

"He will live," he said; "he's all right, but

you must keep him very quiet. His brain has had a shock. Let the room be kept quite dark."

Bridget's eyes grew luminous.

"Is it the truth yer tellin' me, doctor, dear!" she exclaimed, seizing his hands wildly. "God bless ye for thim wurrds, sorr, that the little gossoon'll be well again!"

Her cup of joy was running over. She bent over her boy. Patsy's eyelids quivered, and the blue eyes opened wide and innocent.

"Och, thin, is it me own Patsy, dear, me own jewel of a b'y, me own cliver little gossoon wid the thrue blue eyes," she murmured, pushing the hair gently from the white brow.

She was still bending over him in an ecstasy of joy, when there was the sudden apparition of a little red-bloused figure at the door. Mrs. McBride ran to meet her with outstretched hands.

"An' how's yer own poor lad, Mrs. Potvin? It's meself that's the sorry wan for ye this day."

The little Frenchwoman sank exhausted on the chair.

"Oh! Hilaire, hees leg she's broke, but he is not die, the doctor says he get better soon!" She smiled faintly. Bridget caught the hand of the other woman.

"Come thin, and see me beautiful b'y. Look

at that now, the jewel, wid his eyes open, an' the red comin' back to his cheeks, the darlin'!"

Now, curious it may be, improbable it doubtless is, but the occurrences of that Monday morning ended the deadly feud. The reasons are partly obvious—a common sorrow, a common joy—what you will. The fact remains to history that then and there in the house of McBride was smoked the pipe of peace.

THE BLUE POND

GEOFFREY whistled as he hung up his school-bag in the hall one warm summer afternoon, and then ran upstairs to find his sister Maisie.

"Where are you, Maisie?" he shouted on the way up; and, finding her curled up in the bow window, her golden head bent over "The Green Fairy Book," he began breathlessly, "Oh, I say, Maisie, wasting this glorious day reading a stuffy book! Hurry up and get your hat. Silas says we may go and see them plough the high field, and ride Dexter home afterwards!"

At this Maisie shook back her golden mane, jumped up, snatched her garden hat from its peg, and, before you could say Jack Robinson, the two were scampering along the cowpath that ran by the fence of the lower field, followed by Oscar, their old setter.

As the children climbed the log fence that divided the lower field from the middle meadow (as it was called) they came in sight of the Blue Pond. A *blue* pond it surely was to-day. It seemed even bluer than the sky itself, and,

circled by the bright green of the spring grass, it made one think of a sapphire set with emeralds.

"Hurrah," cried Geoffrey, as he spied it. "Come on, Maisie," and he raced off to the pond, Maisie and Oscar following close at his heels.

"Isn't it *be-yoot-iful?*" gasped Maisie, when she arrived, breathless from the race.

"You bet it is," answered Geoffrey, "and let's find the boats we made last year, and sail 'em. I believe, though, we put them on the island, and it'll be mighty hard to get them."

Now the "island," as the children called it, was little more than a boulder with a good-sized top, which, in summer time, rose some distance from the water's surface, and was reached from the shore by jumping across some natural stepping-stones, but at this season the water was high in the centre of the pond, and some of the stepping-stones were quite a distance under it.

"I tell you what," said Geoffrey as they stepped gingerly from stone to stone, "it would be no joke to tumble in here, for even in summer Dad says it's six feet deep."

At last they safely reached the little island, and began the search for their boats, which, together with sticks and treasured pieces of string, books, and various other "properties," they kept in a sort of dent in the top of the big rock.

"Oh, here's my dear old ship 'Pinafore,'" cried Maisie, delightedly, as she picked up a little sailboat somewhat out of repair.

"No, it isn't yours, smarty," cried Geoffrey. "It's mine! It's the 'Clementina,' I know!"

"No, Geoff, it's painted blue on the gunwale, and, don't you remember, yours was always red. Besides, here's the name on the bow. Look, Geoff. 'H.M.S. Pinafore.'"

But Geoff was looking in vain for the "Clementina," and therefore felt a bit sulky.

"Well," he answered, "the 'Pinafore' was mine, anyway. I whittled her and rigged her myself."

"Oh, Geoffrey," and Maisie's blue eyes looked watery, "don't you remember you always said you wouldn't own a boat with such a girl name as 'Pinafore?'"

But Geoffrey was not to be appeased. "Take your old ship then!" he said, and gave Maisie a little push. Just a little one, you know, but the boulder was rounded and a little slippery, and there was a splash, a struggle, a scream, and Maisie's hands were thrown up, and then a sort of sickening gurgle sounded as the blue water closed over her head.

"Oh, Maisie, Maisie! here, catch hold of this stick," cried a terrified voice. It seemed to the

boy an hour before Maisie's head appeared above water, and he saw her blindly grasping the air with her hands. She had come up farther from the island stone, and Geoffrey could not reach her, and Maisie could not reach the stick he held out, though she made a brave attempt; so Geoffrey sprang into the water desperately, knowing he could not swim, yet feeling there was nothing else to be done. He must save his darling little sister.

Geoffrey felt the chilly water close above his head and gurgle into his ears. He felt sure he was drowning, and would never see Mother again, or Dad, or Maisie, or Dexter, and then he felt a breath of air on his face as he came to the surface, just as Maisie was disappearing again. He tried to reach her, but sank faster. He tried to pray, and could only say, "O God, God, help!" And then things grew black; there were queer noises in his head, and all was still.

* * * * * * *

When Geoffrey came to himself he was lying on the grass, with the friendly red face of old Silas bending over him anxiously. He heard Silas say in a comforting voice: "Och, Miss Maisie, dear, sure he do be as roight as a trivet, the broth of a b'y that he is!" And Silas took his bandanna handkerchief and wiped the water from the boy's face. And there was Maisie sit-

ting forlornly beside him on the grass, her bright hair now dark and dripping with water, and her eyes red with crying. And there was Dexter on his way to the ploughing, with the reins thrown over his back, nibbling the tender grass, as if nothing had happened.

They all waited a few minutes till Geoffrey's head felt less like a spinning top, and then Silas took a hand of each and led them quickly home, shivering with cold and fright, the salty tears raining down pretty fast.

Half an hour afterwards there was a blazing grate fire in Mother's room, before which sat a boy beautifully done up in a blanket and sipping hot lemonade, and in a big rocking chair a little girl on her mother's knee—a little maid who was looking very pale, but feeling very happy and comfortable.

"Mother, dear," said Geoffrey, "I can never show Maisie how sorry I am for being so beastly cross. But you know I'm sorry, don't you, Sis?" And here there was a good, old-fashioned, brotherly hug. For the boy was so much in earnest, so manly for the moment, that he quite forgot his idea of a boy's dignity.

"When you think what it *might* have been," said Mother, "and all over such a trifle! Never forget it, Geoff, dear."

Do you think he ever *could* forget it?

SOLOMON: A HORNED OWL

SOLOMON: A HORNED OWL

For all his life Solomon had lived the wild, free life of the prairie. While the glaring light of the day was over the earth, he secluded himself in the shade of the scrub oaks and yellow-flowered wolf-willows in a prairie bluff. In the intense darkness of starless nights, or in the mild light of the moon, he flitted about noiselessly, the white and ash-grey of his plumage clearly defined against the deep ultramarine of the sky.

He seldom pursued prey. Rather, he stalked his game, spying it out from his shelter, and flying silently to surprise and pounce upon the creature with his feathered claws. Sometimes it was a field mouse, sometimes only a stupid June bug which flopped clumsily against him. He was not particular as to his menu, and felt no qualms in slaying and consuming the small creatures his Maker had placed on the prairie for his use.

While he was yet young and lusty, there came a sad day for Solomon. The sun shone brightly, and the horned owl slept, perched on a gnarled branch of a low scrub oak. His hearing was uncommonly sharp, principally because the radi-

ating feathers which surrounded his ears were arranged in a sort of cone which acted as an ear trumpet. Therefore he woke, to hear at some distance, strange steps crossing the prairie. Not cattle, he knew by the sound, nor horses either. He listened intently. The steps approached softly now, and stopped close by. Solomon blinked nervously, fluffed out his snowy plumage and prepared for flight, but was foiled in the attempt.

Something suddenly enveloped him in its meshes, and he was dragged from the perch, though his strong claws clung desperately to the scrub oak's branch. The proud, wild creature felt himself borne away across the prairie, and through the streets of the little town, and, though he offered a fierce resistance, clawing and pecking at the net that shrouded him, and at his captor's hands, it was of no avail.

Half an hour later he found himself in a vacant rabbit hutch, where in a delirium of rage and fear he was blindly dashing himself against the wire netting front and wooden walls of his prison.

What was this strange thing that limited his flight so cruelly? He hated it fiercely as he battered himself, in desperate fashion, from side to side.

Shortly before sundown, Solomon changed his tactics. He would fool this wooden thing that held him. He sulked as he sat feigning sleep on an improvised perch, the picture of insulted majesty. One of his feather horns, his sometime pride, had been injured in the fray, and drooped slightly, but the dignity of his demeanor was unimpaired.

As the dusk deepened into darkness his captor, a young naturalist, brought to the owl his supper, a piece of juicy beefsteak, meat such as the soul of Solomon loved; but he scorned it, sitting immovably on his perch, and glaring inscrutably with his great yellow eyes on his jailer. This latter commenced overtures of peace.

"Poor old pepper-pot!" he exclaimed soothingly. "Your temper got the better of you a bit, didn't it? Never mind, though, you'll develop into a regular saint yet!"

The sight of this strange young biped, clothed in tweed, the very sound of his voice, roused the sleeping demon in Solomon's bosom. He snarled fiercely, and dashed his soft, white-feathered body against the netting, tempestuously clutching and clawing at it. He longed to tear in pieces this monster that held him a prisoner. Two ideas dominated him—vengeance and escape. He

was devoured by a wild hunger for the open prairie; nothing but freedom could pacify him.

Day after day he fumed and stormed and flapped and snarled. Night after night he flung himself against his barriers, and sent forth into the silence of the night his maddened, bitter cry:

"Hoo! Hoo—! oo-oo!"

Gradually, however, time and exhaustion wrought a change. Solomon's injured horn feathers fell out, he grew careless of his once spotless raiment of white plumes, and wore a bedraggled aspect. He ate sparingly, and was content to sit forlornly on his perch, gazing unseeingly at his tormentor.

When the days of his captivity numbered thirty-two, one evening at sunset hour, the door of the rabbit hutch was opened. Once more Solomon felt something thrown over him, as the naturalist caught and held him firmly in the hollow of his arm. The owl made a feeble resistance, and then acquiesced in the inevitable.

Through the village streets strode the youth, and out across the open prairie, till he reached the tangled bluff where the bird had been trapped. He drew the covering off the owl, and, setting him gently on the turf, waited to see the creature's glad return to his old life.

Solomon's forlorn appearance aroused a qualm in the lad's breast, as he observed how helplessly the bird remained where he had been placed, staring at him with wide, round eyes, out of which all the fierce spirit had gone. There was no fight left in the creature.

On the day he was taken into captivity he had been young, lusty, full of fire and weird joy; now he stood before his unwilling tormentor hopelessly, suggesting nothing so much as a sorrow-stricken, broken-down old woman.

The brown eyes of the young naturalist grew inky black, as they were apt to do when he was moved. A wordless compassion welled up within him for this creature he had wounded in his scientific enthusiasm.

"Poor old Solomon!" he said, as he turned to go home. The sun was setting in royal wise, in great streaks of purple and gold; and looking back in the gathering dusk, the lad could descry against the light Solomon still standing bewildered and desolate on the prairie grass.

VERSES

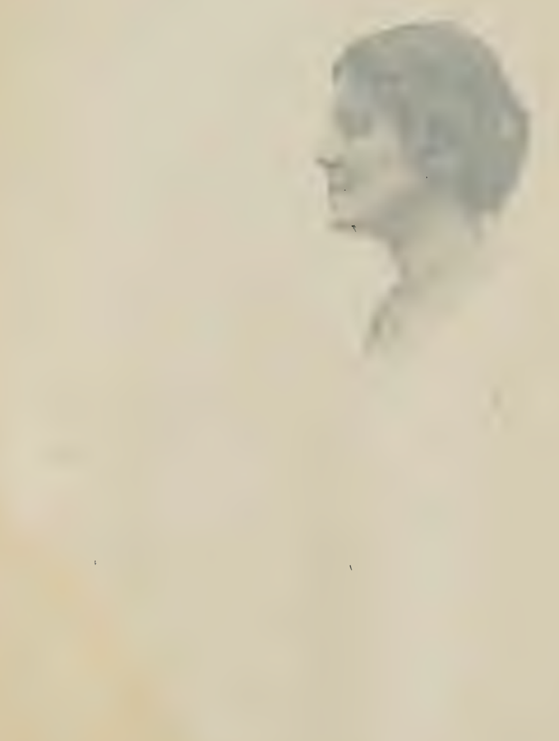
MARY STEWART GIBSON
(1910)

[illegible] CITY-PENT

ONCE [illegible] day,
Ere [illegible]
On a [illegible]
May I [illegible]
God's [illegible] and above
God's [illegible]

May the wind [illegible] boughs
Crooning [illegible]
[illegible]
Swifter [illegible]
Through the [illegible]
Warmly [illegible]

May there [illegible]
In the sky,
May I hear [illegible]
Softly [illegible]
[illegible]
[illegible]



MARY [illegible]

CRY OF THE CITY-PENT

ONCE again, some happy day,
 Ere I die,
On a grassy hillside,
 May I lie,
God's good earth beneath me, and above
 God's blue, blue sky!

May the wind sift through pine boughs
 Crooning low,
Moaning softly if the breeze
 Swifter blow:
Through the branches may the yellow sun
 Warmly glow!

May there be a sunset glory
 In the sky;
May I hear the lapping water
 Softly sigh;
Song of hermit thrush and whip-poor-will
 Be my lullaby!

THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE

"Light thou my Christmas candle at the gladness of some innocent heart."—*Henry Van Dyke.*

"My Christmas candle, Jesu, Lord,
Behold how dim and blue its flame.
The flick'ring shadows mock and gird at it
Till its pale light expires for very shame.

"Now that the candle's out, my house
Is dark and cold with solitary gloom.
Poor wailing Sorrow creeps thro' the bare halls
And Memory sits beside me in my room.

"This darkness smothers me, it is so thick!
Even the candlestick I cannot see.
My seeking hands grope past it in the dark.
Light Thou my Christmas candle, Lord, for Me!"

* * * * * *

And the good Lord did light it on this wise:
He led her through the bitter wintry night
And left her at the door of friendless Poverty,
Whose children cried within for warmth and light.

THE CHRISTMAS CANDLE

Upon the hearth's cold bricks she made a fire,
  While Poverty looked on with her wan smile,
And when the caldron bubbled festively
  She rocked a little sleepy child awhile.

She fed the innocent mouths with Christmas cheer,
  And decked the chill, bare walls with holly red;
She brought fair gifts to dazzle happy eyes,
  Until "An angel has been here," they said.

Then, comforted, and self-forgot, she sought her home,
  Singing a carol to keep up her cheer,
And when her own doorlatch she lifted late
  The Christmas candlelight within shone clear!

Christmastide, 1903.

HARVEST-MOON ON THE GATINEAU

HARVEST-MOON sails serene in cobalt sky;
On the dark Gatineau her beams glint white.
A night hawk swoops and screaming wingeth by,
The cry of loon and whip-poor-will pierces the night.
" I'ya longtemps que je t'aime
Jamais je ne t'oublierai."

From the dark shore strong raftsmen's voices come,
As seated round their camp-fire's ruddy blaze
They sing chansons of Canada their home,
Of early loves, of old Canadian days.
" I'ya longtemps que je t'aime
Jamais je ne t'oublierai."

Now die away the strains of " A la claire fontaine,"
Through darkling waters glides the bark canoe,
Moist paddles softly dipping, and again
Harvest moon reigneth silent in the blue.
" I'ya longtemps que je t'aime
Jamais je ne t'oublierai."

WAKEFIELD, *August*, 1901.

NOON IN AUGUST

STRIDENT note of locust in the air,
  Drowsy hum of crickets in the grass,
  Sleepy drone of bees, and as you pass
Golden golden-rod just everywhere!

Yellow butterflies o'er meadows hover,
  Flame of cardinalis scarlet glows;
  On the sunny slope sweet clover grows,
Sweep of fields beneath and blue sky over.

WAKEFIELD, *August*, 1901.

I LOVE THE DARLING BUTTERCUPS

I love the darling buttercups,
  Because a little girl
May hold one underneath her chin
  That's almost white as pearl
And say, "Do I love butter? See!
For if I do a mark there'll be!"

I love the morning-glories, but
  Before it's afternoon
These poor things have to go to bed.
  I think it's very soon.
Their mother makes them fold up tight
Their pretty dresses for the night.

I love the dear forget-me-nots,
  Because their blue, blue eyes,
Remind me of our baby's ones
  When he first came from the skies;
They grow in crowds about my feet,
And are so little and so sweet!

I LOVE THE DARLING BUTTERCUPS

I love the hollyhocks, because
  They make such lovely "ladies,"
Stuck on a twig with buds for heads,
  And fluffy skirts like Maidie's.
They are the very dearest things
I think that Lady Summer brings!

June, 1903.

BIRD OF CANADA

Bird of my heart,
Deep in the wood thou pipest,
Where the sweet wild things grow,
Where trillium and hepatica may blow
In pure content apart—
Sweet—sweet—Canada, Canada, Canada!

Sweet piper, then,
Out of thy home remote
Whistle and lilt thy flute-like song,
Pipe it clearly and pipe it long.
Carol again—
Sweet—sweet—Canada, Canada, Canada!

August, 1903.

NORTHERN LIGHTS

SPIRIT wings reaching across the night,
Feathered with shimmering fringes of light;
        Dreamlike and drifting,
        Lucent and shifting,
Pulsing and fanning with glory the height.

God's banners streaming across the sky,
Furling, unfurling, in ecstasy;
        Wraithlike and glorious,
        Warlike, victorious,
Waxing and waning they live and they die.

October, 1903.

THE GRASS

POETS sing of flowers, the lily and the rose;
    I'll sing the grass;
In wood and field and prairie, green it grows,
And in the sunless marsh where kingcup blows
    In golden mass.

Gay little children laugh and sing all day
    Where it is green;
With chicory and vetch, where they hold sway
Along the dusty rim of the roadway,
    There it is seen.

Where hill winds blow, and where the moors
        are wide,
    Where waters lave;
Where garden crocuses and pansies hide,
And in the dim churchyard, all daisy-pied,
    On every grave.

July, 1904.

"LITTLE SWEET HEPATICA"

LITTLE sweet hepatica,
  Do you know that April's here?
It is time to waken up—
  Hurry up, my dear!

Come, you little sleepyhead,
  Where's your pretty May-time gear?
Don it, my hepatica—
  April, April's here!

Easter, 1905.

MAY

O May, May!
Sweetest month of all the year,
Have you come to bless us, dear,
With apple-blossoms' pale-rose cheer,
And green leaf there, and May-flower here?
O May, May!

O May, May!
All the joy and bloom you bring
Cannot make my poor heart sing;
Here it lies with broken wing,
And all your sweets can only sting—
O May, May!

1906.

AT "ONONDA"

THERE is a little, lonely, wildwood bird,
Who sings at sweet Ononda in the hills,
The sweetest little song you ever heard.

It sounds like fairy-flute or pipe or bell,
A whirl of song, a scale of clearest notes,
Dulcet and true that from his bird-throat swell.

He sings of sun and shadow on the leaves,
Of leaf-brown pools, of piny fragrances,
Of how his lady-love her soft nest weaves.

He sings of purple hills and blue, blue skies,
Of daisies starring white a grassy slope,
And of keen mountain air in which he flies.

But though I know his piping song so well,
And love to hear him blow his little flute,
I've never seen him nor his name can tell.

LAKE PLACID, N.Y., *July*, 1906.

KINGSMERE IN SEPTEMBER

(*Lines written in the Visitors' Book at "Firholme."*)

High in the hills our little Kingsmere lies,
Guarded forever by Laurentians old,
Crowned by tall tree-tops turning red and gold
Beneath the dappled blue of autumn skies.

Ringed round about with trees the little lake
(Its waters dancing bright on sunny days,
Or darkly blue beneath an autumn haze),
Seems softly dreaming, or but half-awake.

Out in the fields the green cicalas sing;
The crickets' monotone pervades the air.
All bird songs now are hushed, except the rare
Wild note of whip-poor-will at evening.

Sweet Summer's gently drawing near her end,
The corn stands marshalled in tall tasselled rows;
The oats are harvested, the buckwheat blows,
And apple-boughs beneath their burden bend.

So, soon to thee, Firholme, farewell we'll cry,
  And leave thee lonely to the wind and snow,
  But we'll come back again when trilliums
      blow;
Till, then, O sweetest spot, good-bye, good-bye!

1908.

"LIGHT-FOOT WE STRAY"

Light-foot we stray
Some merry day
Down sunny paths with flowers honey-sweet,
Fragrant with thyme and all the herbs that grow,
Rosy with roses climbing high and low,
Royal with purple violets at our feet.
And our Lord *may*
Pass by that way.

Forlorn we go
Some hour of woe
Along a stony, man-forsaken way,
Where sunshine glares brazen and merciless,
And thorns and thistles wear gray, dusty dress,
While we toil stumbling on and cannot pray.
Our Lord that day
Will pass that way.

AN AUTUMN DIRGE

ULTRAMARINE is the sky,
  Joyous gold the leaves;
Yet, oh! the wind's is a sorrowful cry
  Circling about the eaves.

Sunlit cloth-of-gold,
  Russet leaves and red;
Will they make a soft, warm coverlet,
  For one I love that's dead?

Southward fly the birds,
  All without a song;
Will none stay to sing a lullaby
  To one who sleeps so long?

Ultramarine is the sky,
  Blue, and cruelly clear;
Where is the dark gray cloud to mourn
  With me for my dearest dear?

October, 1908.

OF MARY

IN MEMORIAM

The lovely musing look revealed her blest,
As if angelic whispers told her heart—
" Thou hast, beloved, never dwelt apart
From love, but ever known such fondled rest
As fledgelings have in some well-mothered nest."
Yet, even as birds at darkling shadows start,
Her happy shining would, at times, depart,
As if some sacred sorrow secret prest.

But when she stilled that care, and, soul in eyes,
Smiled as if blessèd inwardly anew,
Oh, the pure benison she shed! while grew
In yearning watchers such entranced surmise
As when, from dark and silence, strains arise
Of ecstasy more rare than all they knew.

E. W. T.

December, 1911.